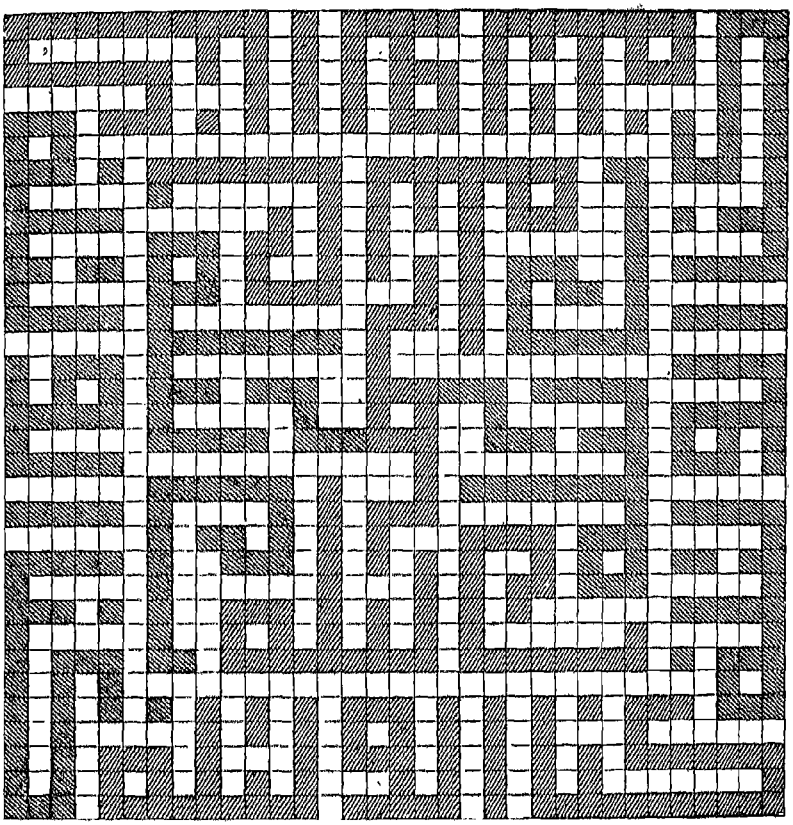
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OF

The Arabian Nights' Entertainments

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME IX



للابرار كلّ شى نبّر

"TO THE PURE ALL THINGS ARE PURE"

(Puris omnia pura).

—*Arab Proverb.*

"Niuna corrotta mente intese mai sanamente parole."

—"*Decameron*"—*conclusion*

"Erubuit, posuitque meum Lucretia librum
Sed coram Bruto. Bruto! recede, leget."

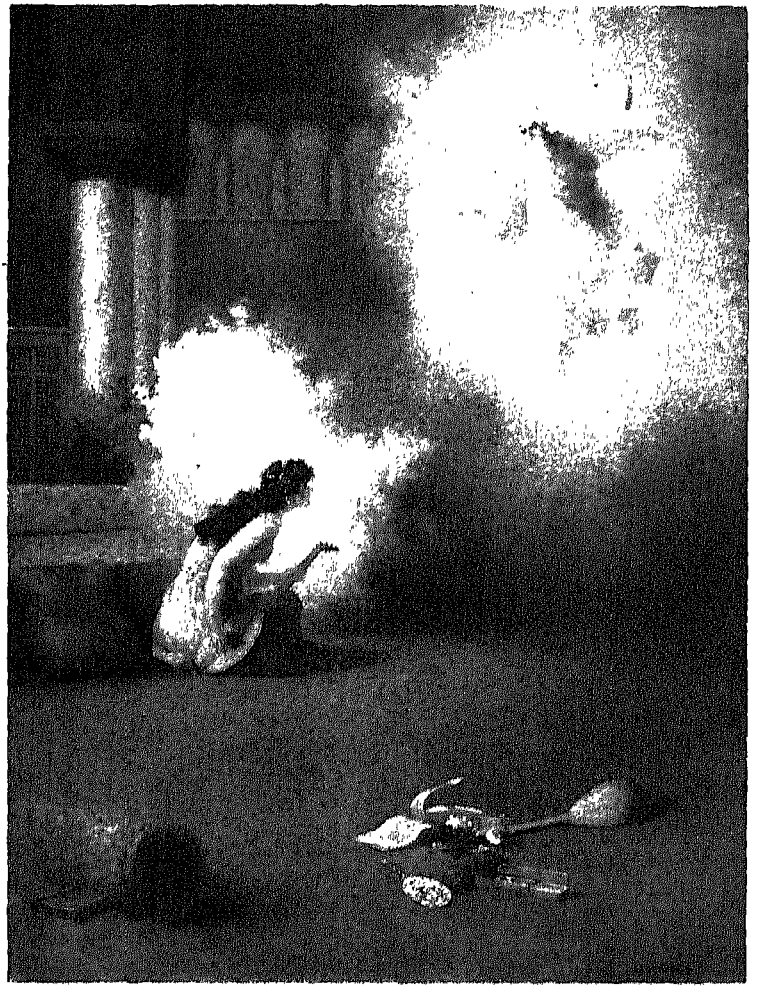
Martial.

"Mieulx est de ris que de larmes escripre,
Pour ce que rire est le propre des hommes."

—RABELAIS.

"The pleasure we derive from perusing the Thousand-and-One Stories makes us regret that we possess only a comparatively small part of these truly enchanting fictions."

—CRICHTON'S "*History of Arabia.*"



No. 60.

The Tale of the Damsel Tohfat al-Kalub.

"Presently, she set it aside and taking the lute, tightened its strings. . . . Then she turned and saw within the chamber an old man, handsome in his hoariness and stately of semblance."

The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night

(SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS)

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY

CAPTAIN SIR R. F. BURTON

K.C.M.G. F.R.G.S. &c. &c. &c.

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IN TWELVE VOLUMES—VOLUME IX

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VOLUME I.

Supplemental Nights

TO THE BOOK OF THE

Thousand Nights and a Night

WITH NOTES ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND EXPLANATORY

BY

RICHARD F. BURTON



GENERAL STUDHOLME J. HODGSON.

My Dear General,

To whom with more pleasure or propriety can I inscribe this volume than to my preceptor of past times ; my dear old friend, whose deep study and vast experience of such light literature as The Nights made me so often resort to him for good counsel and right direction? Accept this little token of gratitude, and believe me, with the best of wishes and the kindest of memories,

Ever your sincere and attached

RICHARD F. BURTON.

London, *July* 15, 1886.

THE TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD.

AFTER offering my cordial thanks to friends and subscribers who have honoured "THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT" (Kama Shastra Society) with their patronage and approbation, I would inform them that my "Anthropological Notes" are by no means exhausted, and that I can produce a complete work only by means of a somewhat extensive Supplement. I therefore propose to print (not publish), for private circulation only, five volumes, bearing title—

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS

TO THE BOOK OF

THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT.

This volume and its successor (Nos. i. and ii.) contain Mr. John Payne's Tales from the Arabic; his three tomes being included in my two. The stories are taken from the Breslau Edition where they are distributed among the volumes between Nos. iv. and xii., and from the Calcutta fragment of 1814. I can say little for the style of the story-stuff contained in this Breslau text, which has been edited with phenomenal incuriousness. Many parts are hopelessly corrupted, whilst at present we have no means of amending the commissions and of supplying the omissions by comparison with other manuscripts. The Arabic is not only faulty, but dry and jejune, comparing badly with that of the "Thousand Nights and a Night," as it appears in the Macnaghten and the abridged Bulak Texts. Sundry of the tales are futile; the majority has little to recommend it, and not a few require a diviner rather than a translator. Yet they are valuable to students as showing the different sources and the heterogeneous materials from and of which the great Saga-book has been compounded. Some are, moreover, striking

and novel, especially parts of the series entitled King Shah Bakht and his Wazir Al-Rahwan (pp. 123–240). Interesting also is the Tale of the "Ten Wazirs" (pp. 35–112), marking the transition of the Persian Bakhtiyár-Námeh into Arabic. In this text also and in this only is found Galland's popular tale "Abou-Hassan; or, the Sleeper Awakened," which I have entitled "The Sleeper and the Waker."

RICHARD F. BURTON.

JUNIOR TRAVELLERS' CLUB,
December 1, 1886.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE NINTH VOLUME.

(LIBRARY EDITION.)

PAGE

No. 58. STORY OF THE LARRIKIN AND THE COOK.

"As he looked, behold, he caught sight of an earthern pan lying arsy-versy upon its mouth; so he raised it from the ground and found under it a horse's tail, freshly cut off and the blood oozing from it; whereby he knew that the Cook adulterated his meat with horseflesh" . . . 4

„ 59. THE TALE OF THE TWO SHARPERS WHO EACH COZENED HIS COMPEER.

"Accordingly, he dug him up and pulled him forth of the grave. . . . Then he tied the dead man's legs and laid on to him with the staff and beat him a grievous beating; but the body never budged" 196

„ 60. THE TALE OF THE DAMSEL TOHFAT AL-KALUB.

"Presently, she set it aside and taking the lute, tightened its strings. . . . Then she turned and saw within the chamber an old man, handsome in his hoariness and stately of semblance" . 302

(frontispiece)

„ 61. THE CONCUBINE OF AL-MAAMUN.

"Up came the guards and eunuchs escorting the women, who were weeping and shrieking and farewelling one another. . . . Now each of them was shackled" 443

CONTENTS OF THE NINTH VOLUME.

Breslau Text.

PAGE

1. THE SLEEPER AND THE WAKER 1

(Lane, ii. pp. 352-79, *The Story of Abu-l-Hasan the Wag, or the Sleeper Awakened.)*

a. STORY OF THE LARRIKIN AND THE COOK 4

2. THE CALIPH OMAR BIN ABD AL-AZIZ AND THE POETS . . 28

3. AL-HAJJAJ AND THE THREE YOUNG MEN 33

4. HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE WOMAN OF THE BARMECIDES 34

5. THE TEN WAZIRS; OR THE HISTORY OF KING AZADBAKHT AND HIS SON 35

a. OF THE USELESSNESS OF ENDEAVOUR AGAINST PERSISTENT ILL FORTUNE 42

aa. STORY OF THE MERCHANT WHO LOST HIS LUCK . . 44

b. OF LOOKING TO THE ENDS OF AFFAIRS 50

ba. TALE OF THE MERCHANT AND HIS SONS . . . *ib.*

c. OF THE ADVANTAGES OF PATIENCE 56

ca. STORY OF ABU SABIR *ib.*

d. OF THE ILL EFFECTS OF IMPATIENCE 62

da. STORY OF PRINCE BIHZAD *ib.*

e. OF THE ISSUES OF GOOD AND EVIL ACTIONS 65

ea. STORY OF KING DADBIN AND HIS WAZIRS . . . 66

f. OF TRUST IN ALLAH 72

fa. STORY OF KING BAKHTZAMAN *ib.*

g. OF CLEMENCY 76

ga. STORY OF KING BIHKARD *ib.*

h. OF ENVY AND MALICE 78

ha. STORY OF AYLAN SHAH AND ABU TAMMAM . . . 79

i. OF DESTINY, OR THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN ON THE FOREHEAD 85

ia. STORY OF KING IBRAHIM AND HIS SON 86

j. OF THE APPOINTED TERM, WHICH, IF IT BE ADVANCED, MAY NOT BE DEFERRED, AND IF IT BE DEFERRED, MAY NOT BE ADVANCED 92

ja. STORY OF KING SULAYMAN SHAH AND HIS NIECE. . 94

PAGE

k. Of the Speedy Relief of Allah 109

ka. Story of the Prisoner and how Allah gave him Relief *ib.*

6. JA'AFAR BIN YAHYA AND ABD AL-MALIK BIN SALIH THE ABBASIDE 112

7. AL-RASHID AND THE BARMECIDES 115

8. IBN AL-SAMMAK AND AL-RASHID 117

9. AL-MAAMUN AND ZUBAYDAH 117

10. AL-NU'UMAN AND THE ARAB OF THE BANU TAY 119

11. FIRUZ AND HIS WIFE 120

12. KING SHAH BAKHT AND HIS WAZIR AL-RAHWAN 123

a. Tale of the Man of Khorasan, His Son and His Tutor . 124

b. Tale of the Singer and the Druggist 131

c. Tale of the King who Kenned the Quintessence of Things 137

d. Tale of the Richard who Married his Beautiful Daughter to the Poor Old Man 142

e. Tale of the Sage and his Three Sons 145

f. Tale of the Prince who Fell in Love with the Picture 147

g. Tale of the Fuller and his Wife and the Trooper . 151

h. Tale of the Merchant, the Crone, and the King . . 154

i. Tale of the Simpleton Husband 156

j. Tale of the Unjust King and the Tither 158

ja. Story of David and Solomon 160

k. Tale of the Robber and the Woman 161

l. Tale of the Three Men and our Lord Isa 164

la. The Disciple's Story 165

m. Tale of the Dethroned Ruler whose Reign and Wealth were Restored to Him 166

n. Tale of the Man whose Caution Slew Him 169

o. Tale of the Man who was Lavish of His House and His Provision to One Whom he Knew Not 170

Tale of the Melancholist and the Sharper 173

p. Tale of Khalbas and His Wife and the Learned Man . 175

r. Tale of The Devotee Accused of Lewdness 177

s. Tale of the Hireling and the Girl 181

t. Tale of the Weaver who became a Leach by Order of his Wife 187

u. Tale of the Two Sharpers who each Cozened his Comperer 191

v. Tale of the Sharpers with the Shroff and the Ass . 199

w. Tale of the Cheat and the Merchants 201

wa. Story of the Falcon and the Locusts 204

x. Tale of the King and His Chamberlain's Wife . . 205

xa. Story of the Crone and the Draper's Wife . . 207

PAGE

y. TALE OF THE UGLY MAN AND HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE . . 210

z. TALE OF THE KING WHO LOST KINGDOM AND WIFE AND WEALTH AND ALLAH RESTORED THEM TO HIM . . . 213

aa. TALE OF SALIM THE YOUTH OF KHORASAN, AND SALMA HIS SISTER 223

bb. TALE OF THE KING OF HIND AND HIS WAZIR 238

SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR 241

13. AL-MALIK AL-ZAHIR RUKN AL-DIN BIBARS AL-BUNDUKDARI AND THE SIXTEEN CAPTAINS OF POLICE . . 247

a. FIRST CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 248

b. SECOND CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 256

c. THIRD CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 257

d. FOURTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 260

e. FIFTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 261

f. SIXTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 262

g. SEVENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 264

h. EIGHTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 267

ha. THE THIEF'S TALE 273

i. NINTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 274

j. TENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 276

k ELEVENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 277

l. TWELFTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 280

m. THIRTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 280

n. FOURTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 281

na. A MERRY JEST OF A CLEVER THIEF 283

nb. TALE OF THE OLD SHARPER 283

o. FIFTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 284

p. SIXTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY 287

14. TALE OF HARUN AL-RASHID AND ABDULLAH BIN NAFI . 288

a. TALE OF THE DAMSEL TOHFAT AL-KULUB AND THE CALIPH HARUN AL-RASHID 291

15. WOMEN'S WILES 341

16. NUR AL-DIN ALI OF DAMASCUS AND THE DAMSEL SITT AL-MULAH 349

17. TALE OF KING INS BIN KAYS AND HIS DAUGHTER WITH THE SON OF KING AL-'ABBAS 378

SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR 430

18. TALE OF THE TWO KINGS AND THE WAZIR'S DAUGHTERS 430

19. THE CONCUBINE AND THE CALIPH 437

20. THE CONCUBINE OF AL-MAAMUN 440

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS

TO THE BOOK OF THE

THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT.

THE SLEEPER AND THE WAKER.[1]

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there was once at Baghdad, in the Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid, a man and a merchant, who had a son Abú al-Hasan-al-Khalí'a by name.[2] The merchant died leaving great store of wealth to his heir who divided it into two equal parts, whereof he laid up one and spent of the other half; and he fell to companying with Persians[3] and with the sons of the merchants and he gave himself up to good drink-

1 Arab. "Al-Náim wa al-Yakzán." This excellent story is not in the Mac. or Bresl. Edits.; but is given in the Breslau Text, iv. 134-189 (Nights cclxxii.-ccxci). It is familiar to readers of the old "Arabian Nights Entertainments" as "Abou-Hassan or the Sleeper Awakened;" and as yet it is the only one of the eleven added by Galland whose original has been discovered in Arabic the learned Frenchman, however, supplied it with embellishments *more suo*, and seems to have taken it from an original fuller than our text as is shown by sundry poetical and other passages which he apparently did not invent. Lane (vol. ii. chap. 12), noting that its chief and best portion is an historical anecdote related as a fact, is inclined to think that it is not a genuine tale of The Nights. He finds it in Al-Ishákí who finished his history about the close of Sultan Mustafá the Osmanli's reign, circa A.H. 1032 (= 1623) and he avails himself of this version as it is "narrated in a simple and agreeable manner." Mr. Payne remarks, "The above title (Asleep and Awake) is of course intended to mark the contrast between the everyday (or waking) hours of Aboulhusn and his fantastic life in the Khalif's palace, supposed by him to have passed in a dream"; I may add that amongst frolicsome Eastern despots the adventure might often have happened and that it might have given a hint to Cervantes.

2 *i.e.*, The Wag. See vol. i. night xxx.: the old version calls him "the Debauchee."

3 Arab. "Al-Fárs"; a people famed for cleverness and debauchery. I cannot see why Lane omitted the Persians, unless he had Persian friends at Cairo.

ing and good eating, till all the wealth[1] he had with him was wasted and wantoned; whereupon he betook himself to his friends and comrades and cup-companions and expounded to them his case, discovering to them the failure of that which was in his hand of wealth. But not one of them took heed of him or even deigned answer him. So he returned to his mother (and indeed his spirit was broken) and related to her that which had happened to him and what had befallen him from his friends, how they had neither shared with him nor requited him with speech. Quoth she, "O Abu al-Hasan, on this wise are the sons[2] of this time: an thou have aught, they draw thee near to them,[3] and if thou have naught, they put thee away from them." And she went on to condole with him, what while he bewailed himself and his tears flowed and he repeated these lines:—

An wane my wealth, no man will succour me, ⁂ When my wealth waxeth all men friendly show:
How many a friend, for wealth showed friendliness ⁂ Who, when my wealth departed, turned to foe!

Then he sprang up and going to the place wherein was the other half of his good, took it and lived with it well; and he sware that he would never again consort with a single one of those he had known, but would company only with the stranger nor entertain even him but one night and that, when it morrowed, he would never know him more. Accordingly he fell to sitting every eventide on the bridge over Tigris and looking at each one who passed by him; and if he saw him to be a stranger, he made friends with him and carried him to his house, where he conversed and caroused with him all night till morning. Then he dismissed him and would never more salute him with the Salám nor ever more drew near unto him neither invited him again. Thus he continued to do for the space of a full year, till, one day, while he sat on the bridge, as was his wont, expecting who should come to him so he might take him and pass the night with him, behold, up came the Caliph and Masrur, the Sworder of his vengeance,[4] disguised in merchants' dress, according to their custom. So Abu al-Hasan looked at them and rising, because he knew them not, asked them, "What say ye? Will ye go with me to my dwelling-place, so ye may eat what is ready and drink what is at

1 *i.e.*, the half he intended for spending-money.
2 *i.e.*, "men," a characteristic Arab idiom: here it applies to the sons of all time
3 *i.e.*, make much of thee.
4 In Lane the Caliph is accompanied by "certain of his domestics."

hand, to wit, platter-bread[1] and meat cooked and wine strained?" The Caliph refused this, but he conjured him and said to him, "Allah upon thee, O my Lord, go with me, for thou art my guest this night, and baulk not my hopes of thee!" And he ceased not to press him till he consented; whereat Abu al-Hasan rejoiced and walking on before him, gave not over talking with him till they came to his house and he carried the Caliph into the saloon. Al-Rashid entered a hall such as an thou sawest it and gazedst upon its walls, thou hadst beheld marvels; and hadst thou looked narrowly at its water-conduits thou wouldst have seen a fountain cased with gold. The Caliph made his man abide at the door; and, as soon as he was seated, the host brought him somewhat to eat; so he ate, and Abu al-Hasan ate with him that eating might be grateful to him. Then he removed the tray and they washed their hands and the Commander of the Faithful sat down again; whereupon Abu al-Hasan set on the drinking vessels and seating himself by his side, fell to filling and giving him to drink[2] and entertaining him with discourse. And when they had drunk their sufficiency the host called for a slave-girl like a branch of Bán who took a lute and sang to it these two couplets:—

O thou aye dwelling in my heart, * Whileas thy form is far from sight,
Thou art my sprite by me unseen, * Yet nearest near art thou, my sprite.

His hospitality pleased the Caliph and the goodliness of his manners, and he said to him, "O youth, who art thou? Make me acquainted with thyself, so I may requite thee thy kindness." But Abu al-Hasan smiled and said, "O my lord, far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass and that I company with thee at other time than this time!" The Prince of True Believers asked, "Why so? and why wilt thou not acquaint me with thy case?" and Abu al-Hasan answered, "Know, O my lord, that my story is strange and that there is a cause for this affair." Quoth Al-Rashid, "And what is the cause?" and quoth he, "The cause hath a tail." The Caliph[3] laughed at his words

1 Arab. "Khubz Mutabbak," = bread baked in a platter, instead of in an oven, an earthen jar previously heated, to the sides of which the scones or bannocks of dough are applied: "it is lighter than oven-bread, especially if it be made thin and leavened." See Al-Shakúri, a medical writer quoted by Dozy.

2 In other parts of The Nights Harun al-Rashid declines wine-drinking.

3 The 'Allámah (doctissimus) Sayce (p. 212, Comparative Philology, London, Trübner, 1885) goes far back for Khalífah = a deputy, a successor. He begins with the Semitic (Hebrew?) root "Khaliph" = to change, exchange: hence "Khaleph" = agio. From this the Greeks got their κόλλυβος and Cicero his "Collybus," a money-lender.

and Abu al-Hasan said, "I will explain to thee this saying by the tale of the Larrikin and the Cook. So hear thou, O my lord, the

STORY OF THE LARRIKIN[1] *AND THE COOK.*"

One of the ne'er-do-wells found himself one fine morning without aught and the world was straitened upon him and patience failed him; so he lay down to sleep and ceased not slumbering till the sun stang him and the foam came out upon his mouth, whereupon he arose, and he was penniless and had not even so much as a single dirham. Presently he arrived at the shop of a Cook, who had set his pots and pans over the fire and washed his saucers and wiped his scales and swept his shop and sprinkled it; and indeed his fats and oils were clear and clarified and his spices fragrant, and he himself stood behind his cooking-pots ready to serve customers. So the Larrikin, whose wits had been sharpened by hunger, went in to him and saluting him, said to him, "Weigh me half a dirham's worth of meat and a quarter of a dirham's worth of boiled grain[2] and the like of bread." So the Kitchener weighed it out to him and the good-for-naught entered the shop, whereupon the man set the food before him and he ate till he had gobbled up the whole and licked the saucers and sat perplexed, knowing not how he should do with the Cook concerning the price of that he had eaten, and turning his eyes about upon everything in the shop; and as he looked, behold, he caught sight of an earthen pan lying arsy-versy upon its mouth; so he raised it from the ground and found under it a horse's tail, freshly cut off and the blood oozing from it; whereby he knew that the Cook adulterated his meat with horseflesh. When he discovered this default, he rejoiced therein and washing his hands, bowed his head and went out; and when

1 Arab. "Harfúsh," (in Bresl. Edit. iv. 138, "Kharfúsh"), in popular parlance a "blackguard." I have to thank Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal, of New York, for sending me a MS. copy of this tale.

2 Arab. "Ta'ám," in Egypt and Somaliland = millet seed (*Holcus Sorghum*) cooked in various ways. In Barbary it is applied to the local staff of life, Kuskusú, wheaten or other flour damped and granulated by hand to the size of peppercorns, and lastly steamed (as we steam potatoes), the cullender-pot being placed over a long-necked jar full of boiling water. It is served with clarified butter, shredded onions and meat; and it represents the Risotto of Northern Italy. Europeans generally find it too greasy for digestion. This Barbary staff of life is of old date and is thus mentioned by Leo Africanus in early sixth century. "It is made of a lump of Dow, first set upon the fire, in a vessel full of holes and afterwards tempered with Butter and Pottage." So says good Master John Pory, "A Geographical Historie of Africa, by John Leo, a Moor," London, 1600, impensis George Bishop.

No. 58.

Story of the Larrikin and the Cook.

"As he looked, behold, he caught sight of an earthern pan lying arsy-versy upon its mouth; so he raised it from the ground and found under it a horse's tail, freshly cut off and the blood oozing from it; whereby he knew that the Cook adulterated his meat with horseflesh."

the Kitchener saw that he went and gave him naught, he cried out, saying, "Stay, O pest, O burglar!" So the Larrikin stopped and said to him, "Dost thou cry out upon me and call to me with these words, O cornute?" Whereat the Cook was angry and coming down from the shop, cried, "What meanest thou by thy speech, O low fellow, thou that devourest meat and millet and bread and kitchen and goest forth with 'the Peace[1] be on thee!' as it were the thing had not been, and payest down naught for it?" Quoth the Lackpenny, "Thou liest, O accursed son of a cuckold!" Whereupon the Cook cried out and laying hold of his debtor's collar, said, "O Moslems, this fellow is my first customer[2] this day and he hath eaten my food and given me naught." So the folk gathered about them and blamed the Ne'er-do-well and said to him, "Give him the price of that which thou hast eaten." Quoth he, "I gave him a dirham before I entered the shop;" and quoth the Cook, "Be everything I sell this day forbidden to me, if he gave me so much as the name of a coin! By Allah, he gave me naught, but ate my food and went out and would have made off, without aught said." Answered the Larrikin, "I gave thee a dirham," and he reviled the Kitchener, who returned his abuse; whereupon he dealt him a buffet and they gripped and grappled and throttled each other. When the folk saw them fighting, they came up to them and asked them, "What is this strife between you, and no cause for it?" and the Lackpenny answered, "Ay, by Allah, but there is a cause for it, and the cause hath a tail!" Whereupon cried the Cook, "Yea, by Allah, now thou mindest me of thyself and thy dirham! Yes, he gave me a dirham and but a quarter of the coin is spent. Come back and take the rest of the price of thy dirham." For he understood what was to do, at the mention of the tail; "and I, O my brother" (added Abu al-Hasan), "my story hath a cause, which I will tell thee." The Caliph laughed at his speech and said, "By Allah, this is none other than a pleasant tale! Tell me thy story and the cause." Replied the host, "With love and goodly gree! Know, O my lord, that my name is Abu al-Hasan al-Khalí'a and that my father died and left me abundant wealth, of which I made two parts. One I laid up and with the other I betook myself to enjoying the pleasures of friendship and conviviality and consorting with intimates and boon-companions and with the sons of the merchants, nor did I leave one but I

1 Arab. "Bi al-Salám" (pron. "Bissalám") = in the Peace (of Allah).
2 And would bring him bad luck if allowed to go without paying.

caroused with him and he with me, and I lavished all my money on comrades and good cheer, till there remained with me naught;[1] whereupon I betook myself to the friends and fellow-topers upon whom I had wasted my wealth, so perhaps they might provide for my case; but, when I visited them and went round about to them all, I found no vantage in one of them, nor would any so much as break a bittock of bread in my face. So I wept for myself and repairing to my mother, complained to her of my case. Quoth she:—Such are friends; an thou have aught, they frequent thee and devour thee, but, an thou have naught, they cast thee off and chase thee away. Then I brought out the other half of my money and bound myself by an oath that I would never more entertain any save one single night, after which I would never again salute him nor notice him; hence my saying to thee:—Far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass, for I will never again company with thee after this night." When the Commander of the Faithful heard this, he laughed a loud laugh and said, "By Allah, O my brother, thou art indeed excused in this matter, now that I know the cause and that the cause hath a tail. Nevertheless, Inshallah, I will not sever myself from thee." Replied Abu al-Hasan, "O my guest, did I not say to thee, Far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass? For indeed I will never again foregather with any!" Then the Caliph rose and the host set before him a dish of roast goose and a bannock of first-bread[2] and sitting down, fell to cutting off morsels and morselling the Caliph therewith. They gave not over eating till they were filled, when Abu al-Hasan brought basin and ewer and potash[3] and they washed their hands. Then he lighted three wax-candles and three lamps, and spreading the drinking-cloth, brought strained wine, clear, old and fragrant, whose scent was as that of virgin musk. He filled the first cup and saying, "O my boon-companion, be ceremony laid aside between us by thy leave! Thy slave is by thee; may I not be afflicted with thy loss!" drank it off and filled a second cup, which he handed to the Caliph with due reverence. His fashion pleased the Commander of the Faithful, and the goodliness of his speech and he said to himself, "By Allah, I will assuredly requite him for this!" Then Abu al-Hasan filled the

1 *i.e.*, of the first half, as has been shown.

2 Arab. "Kumájah" from the Persian Kumásh = bread unleavened and baked in ashes. Egyptians use the word for bannocks of fine flour.

3 Arab. "Kali," our "alcali": for this and other abstergents see vol. i. night xxvii.

cup again and handed it to the Caliph, reciting these two couplets:[1]—

Had we thy coming known, we would for sacrifice * Have poured thee out heart's blood or blackness of the eyes;
Ay, and we would have spread our bosoms in thy way, * That so thy feet might fare on eyelids, carpet-wise.

When the Caliph heard his verses, he took the cup from his hand and kissed it and drank it off and returned it to Abu al-Hasan, who make him an obeisance and filled and drank. Then he filled again and kissing the cup thrice, recited these lines:—

Your presence honoureth the base, * And we confess the deed of grace;
And you absent yourself from us, * No freke we find to fill your place.

Then he gave the cup to the Caliph, saying, "Drink it in health and soundness! It doeth away malady and bringeth remedy and setteth the runnels of health to flow free." So they ceased not carousing and conversing till middle-night, when the Caliph said to his host, "O my brother, hast thou in thy heart a concupiscence thou wouldst have accomplished or a contingency thou wouldst avert?" Said he, "By Allah, there is no regret in my heart save that I am not empowered with bidding and forbidding, so I might manage what is in my mind!" Quoth the Commander of the Faithful, "By Allah, and again by Allah,[2] O my brother, tell me what is in thy mind!" And quoth Abu al-Hasan, "Would Heaven I might be Caliph for one day and avenge myself on my neighbours, for that in my vicinity is a mosque and therein four shaykhs, who hold it a grievance when there cometh a guest to me, and they trouble me with talk and worry me in words and menace me that they will complain of me to the Prince of True Believers, and indeed they oppress me exceedingly, and I crave of Allah the Most High power for one day, that I may beat each and every of them with four hundred lashes, as well as the Imám of the mosque, and parade them round about the city of Baghdad and bid cry before them:—This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso exceedeth in talk and vexeth the folk and turneth their joy to annoy. This is what I wish, and no more." Said the Caliph, "Allah grant thee that thou seekest! Let us crack one last cup and rise ere the dawn draw near, and to-morrow night I will be with thee again." Said Abu

1 These lines have occurred in vol. i. night xii.; I quote Mr. Payne.

2 Arab "Yá 'llah, ya 'lláh", vulg. used for "Look sharp!" *e.g.* "Yá 'llah jári, yá walad" = "Be off at once, boy."

al-Hasan, "Far be it!" Then the Caliph crowned a cup, and putting therein a piece of Cretan Bhang,[1] gave it to his host and said to him, "My life on thee, O my brother, drink this cup from my hand!" and Abu al-Hasan answered, "Ay, by thy life, I will drink it from thy hand." So he took it and drank it off; but hardly had it settled in his stomach, when his head forewent his heels and he fell to the ground like one slain; whereupon the Caliph went out and said to his slave Masrur, "Go in to yonder young man, the house master, and take him up and bring him to me at the palace; and when thou goest out, shut the door." So saying, he went away, whilst Masrur entered, and taking up Abu al-Hasan, shut the door behind him, and made after his master, till he reached with him the palace what while the night drew to an end and the cocks began crowing,[2] and set him down before the Commander of the Faithful, who laughed at him.[3] Then he sent for Ja'afar the Barmecide and when he came before him, said to him, "Note thou yonder young man" (pointing to Abu al-Hasan), "and when thou shalt see him to-morrow seated in my place of estate and on the throne[4] of my Caliphate and clad in my royal clothing, stand thou in attendance upon him and enjoin the Emirs and Grandees and the folk of my household and the officers of my realm to be upon their feet, as in his service and obey him in whatso he shall bid them do; and thou, if he speak to thee of aught, do it and hearken unto his say and gainsay him not in anything during this coming day." Ja'afar acknowledged the order with "Hearkening and obedience" and withdrew, whilst the Prince of True Believers went in to the palace women, who came up to him, and he said to them, "When this sleeper shall awake to-morrow, kiss ye the ground between his hands, and do ye wait upon him and gather round about him and clothe him in the royal clothing and serve him with the service of the Caliphate and deny not aught of his estate, but say to him, Thou art the Caliph." Then he taught them what

1 Arab. "Banj akritashí," a term which has occurred before.

2 A natural clock, called by West Africans Cokkerapeek = Cock-speak. All the world over it is the subject of superstition: see Giles's "Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio" (i. 177), where Miss Li, who is a devil, hears the cock crow and vanishes.

3 In Lane Al-Rashid "found at the door his young men waiting for him and ordered them to convey Abu-l-Hasan upon a mule and returned to the palace; Abu-l-Hasan being intoxicated and insensible. And when the Khaleefeh had rested himself in the palace, he called for," etc.

4 Arab. "Kursi," Assyrian "Kussú" = throne; and "Korsái" in Aramaic (or Nabathean as Al-Mas'udi calls it), the second growth-period of the "Semitic" family, which supplanted Assyrian and Babylonian, and became, as Arabic now is, the common speech of the "Semitic" world.

they should say to him and how they should do with him and withdrawing to a retired room,[1] let down a curtain before himself and slept. Thus fared it with the Caliph; but as regards Abu al-Hasan, he gave not over snoring in his sleep till the day brake clear, and the rising of the sun drew near, when a woman in waiting came up to him and said to him, "O our lord, the morning prayer!" Hearing these words he laughed and opening his eyes, turned them about the palace and found himself in an apartment whose walls were painted with gold and lapis lazuli and its ceiling dotted and starred with red gold. Around it were sleeping chambers, with curtains of gold-embroidered silk let down over their doors, and all about vessels of gold and porcelain and crystal and furniture and carpets dispread and lamps burning before the niche wherein men prayed, and slave-girls and eunuchs and Mamelukes and black slaves and boys and pages and attendants. When he saw this he was bewildered in his wit and said, "By Allah, either I am dreaming a dream, or this is Paradise and the Abode of Peace[2]!" And he shut his eyes and would have slept again. Quoth one of the eunuchs, "O my lord, this is not of thy wont, O Commander of the Faithful!" Then the rest of the handmaids of the palace came up to him and lifted him into a sitting posture, when he found himself upon a mattrass, raised a cubit's height from the ground and all stuffed with floss silk. So they seated him upon it and propped his elbow with a pillow, and he looked at the apartment and its vastness and saw those eunuchs and slave-girls in attendance upon him and standing about his head, whereupon he laughed at himself and said, "By Allah, 'tis not as I were on wake, yet I am not asleep!" And in his perplexity he bowed his chin upon his bosom and then opened his eyes, little by little, smiling and saying, "What is this state wherein I find myself?" Then he arose and sat up, whilst the damsels laughed at him privily; and he was bewildered in his wit, and bit his finger; and as the bite pained him, he cried "Oh!" and was vexed; and the

1 Arab. "Makán mahjúb," which Lane renders by "a private closet," and Payne by a "privy place," suggesting that the Caliph slept in a numéro cent. So, when starting for the "Trakki Campaign," Sir Charles Napier (of Sind), in his zeal for lightening officers' baggage, inadvertently chose a water-closet tent for his head-quarters—*magno cum risu* not of the staff, who had a strange fear of him, but of the multitude who had not.

2 Arab. "Dar al-Salam," one of the seven "Gardens" into which the Mohammedan Paradise is divided. Man's fabled happiness began in a Garden (Eden) and the suggestion came naturally that it would continue there. For the seven Heavens, see vol. vi. night dcccxvi.

Caliph watched him, whence he saw him not, and laughed. Presently Abu al-Hasan turned to a damsel and called to her; whereupon she answered, "At thy service, O Prince of True Believers!" Quoth he, "What is thy name?" and quoth she, "Shajarat al-Durr.[1]" Then he said to her, "By the protection of Allah, O damsel, am I Commander of the Faithful?" She replied, "Yes, indeed, by the protection of Allah thou in this time art Commander of the Faithful." Quoth he, "By Allah, thou liest, O thousandfold whore[2]!" Then he glanced at the Chief Eunuch and called to him, whereupon he came to him and kissing the ground before him, said, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful." Asked Abu al-Hasan, "Who is Commander of the Faithful?" and the Eunuch answered "Thou." And Abu al-Hasan said, "Thou liest, thousandfold he-whore that thou art!" Then he turned to another eunuch and said to him, "O my chief,[3] by the protection of Allah, am I Prince of the True Believers?" Said he, "Ay, by Allah, O my lord, thou art in this time Commander of the Faithful and Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds." Abu al-Hasan laughed at himself and doubted of his reason and was bewildered at what he beheld, and said, "In one night do I become Caliph? Yesterday I was Abu al-Hasan the Wag, and to-day I am Commander of the Faithful." Then the Chief Eunuch came up to him and said, "O Prince of True Believers (the name of Allah encompass thee!) thou art indeed Commander of the Faithful and Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds!" And the slave-girls and eunuchs flocked round about him, till he arose and abode wondering at his case. Hereupon the Eunuch brought him a pair of sandals wrought with raw silk and green silk and purfled with red gold, and he took them and after examining them set them in his sleeve; whereat the Castrato cried out and said, "Allah! Allah! O my lord, these are sandals for the treading of thy feet, so thou mayst wend to the wardrobe." Abu al-Hasan was confounded, and shaking the sandals from his sleeve, put them on his feet, whilst the Caliph died[4] of laughter at him. The slave forewent him to the chapel of ease, where he entered and doing his job,[5] came out

1 Branch of Pearl, see vol. i. night xl.

2 Arab. "Kahbah," the lowest word (vol. i. night vii.), effectively used in contrast with the speaker's surroundings.

3 Arab. "Yá kabíri," = mon brave, my good man.

4 This exaggeration has now become familiar to English speech.

5 Like an Eastern he goes to the water-closet the first thing in the morning, or rather dawn, and then washes ceremonially before saying the first prayer.

into the chamber, whereupon the slave-girls brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver and poured water on his hands[1] and he made the Wuzú-ablution. Then they spread him a prayer-carpet and he prayed. Now he knew not how to pray[2] and gave not over bowing and prostrating for twenty inclinations,[3] pondering in himself the while and saying, "By Allah, I am none other than the Commander of the Faithful in very truth! This is assuredly no dream, for all these things happen not in a dream." And he was convinced and determined in himself that he was Prince of True Believers; so he pronounced the Salám[4] and finished his prayers; whereupon the Mamelukes and slave-girls came round about him with bundled suits of silken and linen stuffs and clad him in the custom of the Caliphate and gave the royal dagger in his hand. Then the Chief Eunuch came in and said, "O Prince of True Believers, the Chamberlain is at the door craving permission to enter." Said he, "Let him enter!" whereupon he came in and after kissing ground offered the salutation, "Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" At this Abu al-Hasan rose and descended from the couch to the floor; whereupon the official exclaimed "Allah! Allah! O Prince of True Believers, wottest thou not that all men are thy lieges and under thy rule and that it is not meet for the Caliph to rise to any man?" Presently the Eunuch went out before him, and the little white slaves behind him, and they ceased not going till they raised the curtain and brought him into the hall of judgment and the throne-room of the Caliphate. There he saw the curtains and the forty doors and Al-'Ijlí and Al-Rakáshí the poet, and 'Ibdán and Jadím and Abu Ishák[5] the cup-companion and beheld swords drawn and the lions[6] compassing the throne as the white of the eye encircleth the black, and gilded glaives and death-dealing bows

1 I have explained why an Eastern does not wash in the basin as Europeans do, in vol i. night xxiii.

2 *i.e.*, He was so confused that he forgot. All Moslems know how to pray, whether they pray or not.

3 The dawn-prayer consists of only four inclinations (*raka'át*); two "Farz" (divinely appointed), and two Sunnah (the custom of the Apostle). For the Raka'áh see Lane, M.E. chapt. iii; it cannot be explained without illustrations.

4 After both sets of prayers, Farz and Sunnah, the Moslem looks over his right shoulder and says "The Peace (of Allah) be upon you and the ruth of Allah," and repeats the words over the left shoulder. The salutation is addressed to the Guardian Angels or to the bystanders (Moslems) who, however, do not return it.

5 *i.e.*, Ibrahim of Mosul the musician. See vol. iii. night cclxxiv.

6 Arab. "Liyúth" plur of "Layth," a lion: here warriors are meant.

and Ajams and Arabs and Turks and Daylamites and folk and peoples and Emirs and Wazirs and Captains and Grandees and Lords of the land and men of war in band, and in very sooth there appeared the might of the house of Abbas[1] and the majesty of the Prophet's family. So he sat down upon the throne of the Caliphate and set the dagger[2] on his lap, whereupon all present came up to kiss ground between his hands and called down on him length of life and continuance of weal. Then came forward Ja'afar the Barmecide and kissing the ground, said, "Be the wide world of Allah the treading of thy feet and may Paradise be thy dwelling-place and the Fire the home of thy foes! Never may neighbour defy thee nor the lights of fire die out for thee,[3] O Caliph of all cities and ruler of all countries!" Therewithal Abu al-Hasan cried out at him and said, "O dog of the sons of Barmak, go down forthright, thou and the chief of the city police, to such a place in such a street and deliver an hundred dinars of gold to the mother of Abu al-Hasan the Wag and bear her my salutation. Then, go to such a mosque and take the four Shaykhs and the Imám and scourge each of them with a thousand[4] lashes and mount them on beasts, face to tail, and parade them round about all the city and banish them to a place other than this city; and bid the crier make cry before them, saying:—"This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso multiplieth words and molesteth his neighbours and damageth their delights and stinteth their eating and drinking!" Ja'afar received the command and answered "With obedience"; after which he went down from before Abu al-Hasan to the city and did all he had ordered him to do. Meanwhile, Abu al-Hasan abode in the Caliphate, taking and giving, bidding and forbidding and carrying out his command till the end of the day, when he gave leave and permission to withdraw, and the Emirs and Officers of state departed to their

1 The Abbasides traced their descent from Al-Abbas, Mohammed's uncle, and justly held themselves as belonging to the family of the Prophet. See vol. i. night xli.

2 Arab "Nimshah" = "half-sword." See vol. ii. night lxxvii.

3 *i.e.*, May thy dwelling-place never fall into ruin. The prayer has, strange to say, been granted. "The present city on the Eastern bank of the Tigris was built by Haroun al-Rashid, and his house still stands there and is an object of reverent curiosity." So says my friend Mr. Grattan Geary (vol. i. p. 212, "Through Asiatic Turkey," London: Low, 1878) He also gives a sketch of Zubaydah's tomb on the western bank of the Tigris near the suburb which represents old Baghdad; it is a pineapple dome springing from an octagon, both of brick once revetted with white stucco.

4 In the Bresl. Edit. four hundred. I prefer the exaggerated total.

several occupations and he looked towards the Chamberlain and the rest of the attendants and said, "Begone!" Then the Eunuchs came to him and calling down on him length of life and continuance of weal, walked in attendance upon him and raised the curtain, and he entered the pavilion of the Harem, where he found candles lighted and lamps burning and singing-women smiting on instruments, and ten slave-girls, high-bosomed maids. When he saw this, he was confounded in his wit and said to himself, "By Allah, I am in truth Commander of the Faithful!" presently adding, "or haply these are of the Jánn and he who was my guest yesternight was one of their kings who saw no way to requite my favours save by commanding his Ifrits to address me as Prince of True Believers. But an these be of the Jann may Allah deliver me in safety from their mischief!" As soon as he appeared, the slave-girls rose to him and carrying him up on to the daïs,[1] brought him a great tray, bespread with the richest viands. So he ate thereof with all his might and main, till he had gotten his fill, when he called one of the handmaids and said to her, "What is thy name?" Replied she, "My name is Miskah,[2]" and he said to another, "What is thy name?" Quoth she, "My name is Tarkah.[3]" Then he asked a third, "What is thy name?" who answered, "My name is Tohfah[4];" and he went on to question the damsels of their names, one after other, till he had learned the ten, when he rose from that place and removed to the wine-chamber. He found it every way complete and saw therein ten great trays, covered with all fruits and cates and every sort of sweetmeats. So he sat down and ate thereof after the measure of his competency, and finding there three troops of singing-girls was amazed and made the girls eat. Then he sat and the singers also seated themselves, whilst the black slaves and the white slaves and the eunuchs and pages and boys stood, and of the slave-girls some sat and others stood. The damsels sang and warbled all varieties of melodies and the place rang with the sweetness of the songs, whilst the pipes cried out and the lutes with them wailed, till it seemed to Abu al-Hasan that he was in Paradise and his heart was heartened and his breast broadened. So he sported and

1 *i.e.*, the raised recess at the upper end of an Oriental saloon, and the place of honour, which Lane calls by its Egyptian name "Liwán." See his vol. i. 312 and his M.E. chapt. i.: also my vol. iii. night cclxiii.

2 "Bit o' Musk."

3 "A gin," a snare.

4 "A gift," a present. It is instructive to compare Abu al-Hasan with Sancho Panza, sprightly Arab wit with grave Spanish humour.

joyance grew on him and he bestowed robes of honour on the damsels and gave and bestowed, challenging this girl and kissing that and toying with a third, plying one with wine and morselling another with meat, till nightfall. All this while the Commander of the Faithful was diverting himself with watching him and laughing, and when night fell he bade one of the slave-girls drop a piece of Bhang in the cup and give it to Abu al-Hasan to drink. So she did his bidding and gave him the cup, which no sooner had he drunk than his head forewent his feet.[1] Therewith the Caliph came forth from behind the curtain, laughing, and calling to the attendant who had brought Abu al-Hasan to the palace, said to him, "Carry[2] this man to his own place." So Masrur took him up, and carrying him to his own house, set him down in the saloon. Then he went forth from him, and shutting the saloon-door upon him, returned to the Caliph, who slept till the morrow. As for Abu al-Hasan, he gave not over slumbering till Almighty Allah brought on the morning, when he recovered from the drug and awoke, crying out and saying, "Ho, Tuffáhah! Ho, Ráhat al-Kulúb! Ho, Miskah! Ho, Tohfah[3]!" And he ceased not calling upon the palace hand-maids till his mother heard him summoning strange damsels, and rising, came to him and said, "Allah's name encompass thee! Up with thee, O my son, O Abu al-Hasan! Thou dreamest." So he opened his eyes, and finding an old woman at his head, raised his eyes and said to her, "Who art thou?" Quoth she, "I am thy mother;" and quoth he, "Thou liest! I am the Commander of the Faithful, the Viceregent of Allah." Whereupon his mother shrieked aloud and said to him, "Heaven preserve thy reason! Be silent, O my son, and cause not the loss of our lives and the wasting of thy wealth, which will assuredly befal us if any hear this talk and carry it to the Caliph." So he rose from his sleep, and finding himself in his own saloon and his mother by him, had doubts of his wit, and said to her, "By Allah, O my mother, I saw myself in a dream in a palace, with slave-girls and Mamelukes about me and in attendance upon me, and I sat upon the throne of the Caliphate and ruled. By Allah, O my mother, this is what I saw, and in very sooth it was no dream!" Then he bethought himself

1 *i.e.*, he fell down senseless. The old version has "his head knocked against his knees."

2 Arab. "Waddí" vulg. Egyptian and Syrian for the classical "Addí" (ii. of Addú = preparing to do). No wonder that Lane complains (iii. 376) of the "vulgar style, abounding in errors."

3 O Apple, O Repose o' Hearts, O Musk, O Choice Gift.

awhile and said, "Assuredly,[1] I am Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a, and this that I saw was only a dream when I was made Caliph and bade and forbade." Then he bethought himself again and said, "Nay, but 'twas not a dream, and I am none other than the Caliph, and indeed I gave gifts and bestowed honour-robes." Quoth his mother to him, "O my son, thou sportest with thy reason: thou wilt go to the mad-house[2] and become a gazing-stock. Indeed, that which thou hast seen is only from the foul Fiend, and it was an imbroglio of dreams, for at times Satan sporteth with men's wits in all manners of ways.[3]" Then said she to him, "O my son, was there any one with thee yesternight?" And he reflected and said, "Yes; one lay the night with me and I acquainted him with my case and told him my tale. Doubtless, he was of the Devils, and I, O my mother, even as thou sayst truly, am Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a." She rejoined, "O my son, rejoice in tidings of all good, for yesterday's record is that there came the Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide and his many, and beat the Shaykhs of the mosque and the Imam, each a thousand lashes; after which they paraded them round about the city, making proclamation before them and saying:—This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso faileth in goodwill to his neighbours and troubleth on them their lives! And he banished them from Baghdad. Moreover, the Caliph sent me an hundred dinars and sent to salute me." Whereupon Abu al-Hasan cried out and said to her, "O ill-omened crone, wilt thou contradict me and tell me that I am not the Prince of True Believers? 'Twas I who commanded Ja'afar the Barmecide to beat the Shaykhs and parade them about the city and make proclamation before them, and 'twas I, very I, who sent thee the hundred dinars and sent to salute thee, and I, O beldam of ill-luck, am in very deed the Commander of the Faithful, and thou art a liar, who would make me out an idiot." So saying, he rose up and fell upon her and beat her with a staff of almond-wood, till she cried out, "Help, O Moslems!" and he increased the beating upon her, till the folk heard her cries and coming to her, found Abu al-Hasan bashing his mother and saying to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, am I not the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast ensorcelled me!" When the folk heard his words, they said, "This man

1 Arab. "Doghri," a pure Turkish word, in Egypt meaning "truly, with truth," straightforwardly; in Syria = straight (going), directly.

2 Arab. "Máristán," see vol i. night xxviii.

3 The scene is a rechauffé of Badr al-Din Hasan and his wife, vol. i. night xxiv.

raveth," and doubted not of his madness. So they came in upon him, and seizing him, pinioned his elbows, and bore him to the Bedlam. Quoth the Superintendant, "What aileth this youth?" and quoth they, "This is a madman, afflicted of the Jinn." "By Allah," cried Abu al-Hasan, "they lie against me! I am no madman, but the Commander of the Faithful." And the Superintendant answered him, saying, "None lieth but thou, O foulest of the Jinn-maddened!" Then he stripped him of his clothes, and clapping on his neck a heavy chain,[1] bound him to a high lattice and fell to beating him two bouts a day and two anights; and he ceased not abiding on this wise the space of ten days. Then his mother came to him and said, "O my son, O Abu al-Hasan, return to thy right reason, for this is the Devil's doing." Quoth he, "Thou sayst sooth, O my mother, and bear thou witness of me that I repent me of that talk and turn me from my madness. So do thou deliver me, for I am nigh upon death." Accordingly his mother went out to the Superintendant[2] and procured his release and he returned to his own house. Now this was at the beginning of the month, and when it ended, Abu al-Hasan longed to drink liquor and, returning to his former habit, furnished his saloon and made ready food and bade bring wine; then, going forth to the bridge, he sat there, expecting one whom he should converse and carouse with, according to his custom. As he sat thus, behold, up came the Caliph and Masrur to him; but Abu al-Hasan saluted them not and said to Al-Rashid, "No friendly welcome to thee, O King of the Jánn!" Quoth Al-Rashid, "What have I done to thee?" and quoth Abu al-Hasan, "What more couldst thou do than what thou hast done to me, O foulest of the Jánn? I have been beaten and thrown into Bedlam, where all said I was Jinn-mad and this was caused by none save thyself. I brought thee to my house and fed thee with my best; after which thou didst empower thy Satans and Marids to disport themselves with my wits from morning to evening. So avaunt and aroynt thee and wend thy ways!" The Caliph smiled and, seating himself by his side said to him, "O my brother, did I not tell that I would return to thee?" Quoth Abu al-Hasan, "I have no need of thee; and as the byword sayeth in verse:—

Fro' my friend, 'twere meeter and wiser to part, * For what eye sees not born shall ne'er sorrow heart.

1 Arab. "Janzir," another atrocious vulgarism for "Zanjir," which, however, has occurred before.

2 Arab. "Arafshah."

And indeed, O my brother, the night thou camest to me and we conversed and caroused together, I and thou, 'twas as if the Devil came to me and troubled me that night." Asked the Caliph, "And who is he, the Devil?" and answered Abu al-Hasan, "He is none other than thou;" whereat the Caliph laughed and coaxed him and spake him fair, saying, "O my brother, when I went out from thee, I forgot the door and left it open and perhaps Satan came in to thee.[1]" Quoth Abu al-Hassan, "Ask me not of that which hath betided me. What possessed thee to leave the door open, so that the Devil came into me and there befel me with him this and that?" And he related to him all that had betided him, first and last (and in repetition is no fruition); what while the Caliph laughed and hid his laughter. Then said he to Abu al-Hasan, "Praised be Allah who hath done away from thee whatso irked thee and that I see thee once more in weal!" And Abu al-Hasan said, "Never again will I take thee to cup-companion or sitting-comrade; for the proverb saith:—Whoso stumbleth on a stone and thereto returneth, upon him be blame and reproach. And thou, O my brother, nevermore will I entertain thee nor company with thee, for that I have not found thy heel propitious to me.[2]" But the Caliph coaxed him and said, "I have been the means of thy winning to thy wish anent the Imam and the Shaykhs." Abu al-Hasan replied, "Thou hast"; and Al-Rashid continued, "And haply somewhat may betide which shall gladden thy heart yet more." Abu al-Hasan asked, "What dost thou require of me?" and the Commander of the Faithful answered, "Verily, I am thy guest; reject not the guest." Quoth Abu al-Hasan, "On condition that thou swear to me by the charcts on the seal of Solomon David's son (on the twain be the Peace!) that thou wilt not suffer thine Ifrits to make fun of me." He replied, "To hear is to obey!" Whereupon the Wag took him and brought him into the saloon and set food before him and entreated him with friendly speech. Then he told him all that had befallen him, whilst the Caliph was like to die of stifled laughter; after which Abu al-Hasan removed the tray of food and bringing the wine-service, filled a

1 In the "Mishkát al-Masábih" (ii. 341), quoted by Lane, occurs the Hadis, "Shut your doors anights and when so doing repeat the Basmalah; for the Devil may not open a door shut in Allah's name." A pious Moslem in Egypt always ejaculates, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionating," etc., when he locks a door, covers up bread, doffs his clothes, etc., to keep off devils and dæmons.

2 An Arab idiom meaning, "I have not found thy good fortune (Ka'b = heel, glory, prosperity) do me any good."

cup and cracked it three times, then gave it to the Caliph, saying, "O boon-companion mine, I am thy slave and let not that which I am about to say offend thee, and be thou not vexed, neither do thou vex me." And he recited these verses :—

Hear one that wills thee well! Lips none shall bless * Save those who drink for drunk and all transgress.
Ne'er will I cease to swill while night falls dark * Till lout my forehead low upon my tasse:
In wine like liquid sun is my delight * Which clears all care and gladdens allegiesse.

When the Caliph heard these his verses and saw how apt he was at couplets, he was delighted with exceeding delight and taking the cup, drank it off, and the twain ceased not to converse and carouse till the wine rose to their heads. Then quoth Abu al-Hasan to the Caliph, "O boon-companion mine, of a truth I am perplexed concerning my affair, for meseemed I was Commander of the Faithful and ruled and gave gifts and largesse, and in very deed, O my brother, it was not a dream." Quoth the Caliph, "These were the imbroglios of sleep," and crumbling a bit of Bhang into the cup, said to him, "By my life, do thou drink this cup"; and said Abu al-Hasan, "Surely I will drink it from thy hand." Then he took the cup and drank it off, and no sooner had it settled in his stomach than his head fell to the ground before his feet. Now his manners and fashions pleased the Caliph and the excellence of his composition and his frankness, and he said in himself, "I will assuredly make him my cup-companion and sitting-comrade." So he rose forthright and saying to Masrur, "Take him up," returned to the palace. Accordingly, the Eunuch took up Abu al-Hasan and carrying him to the palace of the Caliphate, set him down before Al-Rashid, who bade the slaves and slave-girls compass him about, whilst he himself hid in a place where Abu al-Hasan could not see him. Then he commanded one of the hand-maidens to take the lute and strike it over the Wag's head, whilst the rest smote upon their instruments. So they played and sang, till Abu al-Hasan awoke at the last of the night and heard the symphony of lutes and tambourines and the sound of the flutes and the singing of the slave-girls, whereupon he opened his eyes and finding himself in the palace, with the hand-maids and eunuchs about him, exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Come to my help this night which meseems more unlucky than the former! Verily, I am fearful of the Madhouse

and of that which I suffered therein the first time, and I doubt not but the Devil is come to me again, as before. O Allah, my Lord, put Thou Satan to shame!" Then he shut his eyes and laid his head in his sleeve, and fell to laughing softly and raising his head bytimes, but still found the apartment lighted and the girls singing. Presently, one of the eunuchs sat down at his head and said to him, "Sit up, O Prince of True Believers, and look on thy palace and thy slave-girls." Said Abu al-Hasan, "Under the veil of Allah, am I in truth Commander of the Faithful, and dost thou not lie? Yesterday I rode not forth, neither ruled, but drank and slept, and this eunuch cometh to make me rise." Then he sat up and recalled to thought that which had betided him with his mother and how he had beaten her and entered the Bedlam, and he saw the marks of the beating, wherewith the Superintendant had beaten him, and was perplexed concerning his affair and pondered in himself, saying, "By Allah, I know not how my case is nor what is this that betideth me!" Then, gazing at the scene around him, he said privily, "All these are of the Jann in human shape, and I commit my case to Allah." Presently he turned to one of the damsels and said to her, "Who am I?" Quoth she, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful"; and quoth he, "Thou liest, O calamity[1]! If I be indeed the Commander of the Faithful, bite my finger." So she came to him and bit it with all her might, and he said to her, "It doth suffice." Then he asked the Chief Eunuch, "Who am I?" and he answered, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful." So he left him and returned to his wonderment: then, turning to a little white slave, said to him, "Bite my ear"; and he bent his head low down to him and put his ear to his mouth. Now the Mameluke was young and lacked sense; so he closed his teeth upon Abu al-Hasan's ear with all his might, till he came near to sever it; and he knew not Arabic, so, as often as the Wag said to him, "It does suffice," he concluded that he said, "Bite like a vice," and redoubled his bite and made his teeth meet in the ear, whilst the damsels were diverted from him with hearkening to the singing-girls, and Abu al-Hasan cried out for succour from the boy and the Caliph lost his senses for laughter. Then he dealt the boy a cuff, and he let go his ear, whereupon all present fell down with laughter and said to the little Mameluke, "Art mad that thou bitest the Caliph's ear on this wise?" And Abu al-Hasan cried

1 Arab "Yá Nakbah" = a calamity to those who have to do with thee!

to them, "Sufficeth ye not, O ye wretched Jinns, that which hath befallen me? But the fault is not yours: the fault is of your Chief who transmewed you from Jinn shape to mortal shape. I seek refuge against you this night by the Throne-verse and the Chapter of Sincerity[1] and the Two Preventives[2]!" So saying the Wag put off his clothes till he was stark naked, and danced among the slave-girls. They bound his hands and he wantoned among them, while they died of laughing at him and the Caliph swooned away for excess of laughter. Then he came to himself and going forth from the curtain to Abu al-Hasan, said to him, "Out on thee, O Abu al-Hasan! Thou slayest me with laughter." So he turned to him and knowing him, said to him, "By Allah, 'tis thou slayest me and slayest my mother and slewest the Shaykhs and the Imam of the Mosque!" After which he kissed ground before him and prayed for the permanence of his prosperity and the endurance of his days. The Caliph at once robed him in a rich robe and gave him a thousand dinars; and presently he took the Wag into especial favour and married him and bestowed largesse on him and lodged him with himself in the palace and made of him the chief of his cup-companions, and indeed he was preferred with him above them and the Caliph advanced him over them all. Now they were ten in number, to wit, Al-'Ijlí and Al-Rakáshi and 'Ibdán and Hasan al-Farazdak and Al-Lauz and Al-Sakar and Omar al-Tartís and Abu Nowas and Abu Ishak al-Nadím and Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a, and by each of them hangeth a story which is told in other than this book.[3] And indeed Abu al-Hasan became high in honour with the Caliph and favoured above all, so that he sat with him and the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim, whose treasure Nuzhat al-Fuád[4] hight, was given to him in marriage. After this Abu al-Hasan the Wag abode with his wife in eating and drinking and all delight of life, till whatso was with them went the way of money, when he said to her, "Harkye, O Nuzhat al-Fuad!" Said she, "At thy service"; and he continued, "I have it in mind to play a trick on the Caliph[5] and thou shalt do the like with the Lady Zubaydah, and we will take of them at once, to begin with, two hundred

1 Koran cxii, the "Chapter of Unity." See vol. iii, night ccxvi.

2 See vol. iii., night clxxvi.

3 Here the author indubitably speaks for himself, forgetting that he ended night cclxxxi. (Bresl. iv. 168), and began that following with Shahrazad's usual formula

4 *i.e.* "Delight of the vitals" (or heart).

5 The trick is a rechauffé of the trick played on Al-Rashid and Zubaydah.

dinars and two pieces of silk." She rejoined, "As thou willest, but what thinkest thou to do?" And he said, "We will feign ourselves dead and this is the trick. I will die before thee and lay myself out, and do thou spread over me a silken napkin and loose my turban over me and tie my toes and lay on my stomach a knife and a little salt.[1] Then let down thy hair and betake thyself to thy mistress Zubaydah, tearing thy dress and slapping thy face and crying out. She will ask thee, What aileth thee? and do thou answer her, May thy head outlive Abu al-Hasan the Wag; for he is dead. She will mourn for me and weep and bid her new treasuress give thee an hundred dinars and a piece of silk[2] and will say to thee:—Go, lay him out and carry him forth. So do thou take of her the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and come back, and when thou returnest to me, I will rise up and thou shalt lie down in my place, and I will go to the Caliph and say to him, May thy head outlive Nuzhat al-Fuad, and will rend my raiment and pluck out my beard. He will mourn for thee and say to his treasurer, Give Abu al-Hasan an hundred dinars and a piece of silk. Then he will say to me, Go; lay her out and carry her forth; and I will come back to thee." Therewith Nuzhat al-Fuad rejoiced and said, "Indeed, this is an excellent device." Then Abu al-Hazan stretched himself out forthright and she shut his eyes and tied his feet and covered him with the napkin and did whatso her lord had bidden her; after which she tare her gear and bared her head and letting down her hair, went in to the Lady Zubaydah, crying out and weeping. When the Princess saw her in this state, she cried, "What plight is this? What is thy story and what maketh thee weep?" And Nuzhat al-Fuad answered, weeping and loud-wailing the while, "O my lady, may thy head live and mayst thou survive Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a; for he is dead!" The Lady Zubaydah mourned for him and said, "Alas, poor Abu al-Hasan the Wag!" and she shed tears for him awhile. Then she bade her treasuress give Nuzhat al-Fuad an hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to her, "O Nuzhat al-Fuad, go, lay him out and carry him forth." So she took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and

1 "Kalb" here is not heart, but stomach. The big toes of the Moslem corpse are still tied in most countries, and in some a sword is placed upon the body, but I am not aware that a knife and salt (both believed to repel evil spirits) are so used in Cairo

2 The Moslem, who may not wear unmixed silk during his lifetime, may be shrouded in it. I have noted that the "Shukkah," or piece, averages six feet in length.

returned to her dwelling, rejoicing, and went in to her spouse and acquainted him what had befallen, whereupon he arose and rejoiced and girdled his middle and danced and took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and laid them up. Then he laid out Nuzhat al-Fuad and did with her as she had done with him; after which he rent his raiment and plucked out his beard and disordered his turband and ran out nor ceased running till he came in to the Caliph, who was sitting in the judgment-hall, and he in this plight, beating his breast. The Caliph asked him, "What aileth thee, O Abu al-Hasan?" and he wept and answered, "Would heaven thy cup-companion had never been and would his hour had never come[1]!" Quoth the Caliph, "Tell me thy case": and quoth Abu al-Hasan, "O my lord, may thy head outlive Nuzhat al-Fuad!" The Caliph exclaimed, "There is no god but God"; and smote hand upon hand. Then he comforted Abu al-Hasan and said to him, "Grieve not, for we will bestow upon thee a bed-fellow other than she." And he ordered the treasurer to give him an hundred dinars and a piece of silk. Accordingly the treasurer did what the Caliph bade him, and Al-Rashid said to him, "Go, lay her out and carry her forth and make her a handsome funeral." So Abu al-Hasan took that which he had given him and returning to his house, rejoicing, went in to Nuzhat al-Fuad and said to her, "Arise, for our wish is won." Hereat she arose and he laid before her the hundred ducats and the piece of silk, whereat she rejoiced, and they added the gold to the gold and the silk to the silk and sat talking and laughing each to other. Meanwhile, when Abu al-Hasan fared forth from the presence of the Caliph and went to lay out Nuzhat al-Fuad, the Commander of the Faithful mourned for her and dismissing the Diwan, arose and betook himself, leaning upon Masrur, the Sworder of his vengeance, to the Lady Zubaydah, that he might condole with her for her hand-maid. He found her sitting weeping and awaiting his coming, so she might condole with him for his boon-companion Abu al-Hasan the Wag. So he said to her, "May thy head outlive thy slave-girl Nuzhat al-Fuad!" and said she, "O my lord, Allah preserve my slave-girl! Mayst thou live and long survive thy boon-companion Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a; for he is dead." The Caliph smiled and said to his eunuch, "O Masrur, verily women are little of wit. Allah upon thee, say, was not Abu al-Hasan with me but now[2]?" Quoth

1 A vulgar ejaculation; the "hour" referring either to birth or to his being made one of the Caliph's equerries.

2 Here the story-teller omits to say that Masrúr bore witness to the Caliph's statement.

the Lady Zubaydah, laughing from a heart full of wrath, "Wilt thou not leave thy jesting? Sufficeth thee not that Abu al-Hasan is dead, but thou must put to death my slave-girl also and bereave us of the twain, and style me little of wit?" The Caliph answered, "Indeed, 'tis Nuzhat al-Fuad who is dead." And the Lady Zubaydah said, "Indeed he hath not been with thee, nor hast thou seen him, and none was with me but now save Nuzhat al-Fuad, and she sorrowful, weeping, with her clothes torn to tatters. I exhorted her to patience and gave her an hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and indeed I was awaiting thy coming, so I might console thee for thy cup-companion Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a, and was about to send for thee.[1]" The Caliph laughed and said, "None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad"; and she, "No, no, good my lord; none is dead but Abu al-Hasan the Wag." With this the Caliph waxed wroth, and the Háshimí vein[2] started out from between his eyes and throbbed: and he cried out to Masrur and said to him, "Fare thee forth to the house of Abu al-Hasan the Wag, and see which of them is dead." So Masrur went out, running, and the Caliph said to the Lady Zubaydah, "Wilt thou lay me a wager?" And said she, "Yes, I will wager, and I say that Abu al-Hasan is dead." Rejoined the Caliph, "And I wager and say that none is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad; and the stake between me and thee shall be the Garden of Pleasance[3] against thy palace and the Pavilion of Pictures.[4]" So they agreed upon this and sat awaiting Masrur's return with the news. As for the Eunuch, he ceased not running till he came to the by-street, wherein was the stead of Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a. Now the Wag was comfortably seated and leaning back against the lattice,[5] and chancing to look round, saw Masrur running along the street and said to Nuzhat al-Fuad, "Meseemeth the Caliph, when I went forth from him dismissed the Diwan and went into the Lady Zubaydah, to condole with her; whereupon she arose and condoled with him, saying, Allah increase thy recompense for the loss of Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a! And he

1 Arab. "Wa kuntu ráihah ursil warák," the regular Fellah language.

2 Arab "'Irk al-Háshimí," see vol. i night xxxv Lane remarks, "Whether it was so in Hashim himself (or only in his descendants), I do not find; but it is mentioned amongst the characteristics of his great-grandson, the Prophet."

3 Arab. "Bostán al-Nuzhah," whose name made the stake appropriate. See vol. i, night xlv.

4 Arab. "Tamásíl" = generally carved images, which, amongst Moslems, always suggest idols and idolatry.

5 The "Shubbák" here would be the "Mashrabiyah," or latticed balcony, projecting from the saloon-wall, and containing room for three or more sitters. It is Lane's "Meshrebeeyeh," sketched in M.E. (Introduction) and has now become familiar to Englishmen.

said to her, None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad, may thy head outlive her! Quoth she, 'Tis not she who is dead, but Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a, thy boon-companion. And quoth he, None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad. And they waxed so obstinate that the Caliph became wroth and they laid a wager, and he hath sent Masrur the Sworder to see who is dead. Now, therefore, 'twere best that thou lie down, so he may sight thee and go and acquaint the Caliph and confirm my saying.[1]" So Nuzhat al-Fuad stretched herself out and Abu al-Hasan covered her with her mantilla and sat weeping at her head. Presently, Masrur the eunuch suddenly came in to him and saluted him, and seeing Nuzhat al-Fuad stretched out, uncovered her face and said, "There is no god but God! Our sister Nuzhat al-Fuad is dead indeed. How sudden was the stroke of Destiny! Allah have ruth on thee and acquit thee of all charge!" Then he returned and related what had passed before the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah, and he laughing as he spoke. "O accursed one," cried the Caliph, "this is no time for laughter! Tell us which is dead of them." Masrur replied, "By Allah, O my lord, Abu al-Hasan is well, and none is dead but Nuzhat al-Fuad." Quoth the Caliph to Zubaydah, "Thou hast lost thy pavilion in thy play," and he jeered at her and said, "O Masrur, tell her what thou sawest." Quoth the Eunuch, "Verily, O my lady, I ran without ceasing till I came in to Abu al-Hasan in his house and found Nuzhat al-Fuad lying dead and Abu al-Hasan sitting tearful at her head. I saluted him and condoled with him and sat down by his side and uncovered the face of Nuzhat al-Fuad and saw her dead and her face swollen.[2] So I said to him:—Carry her out forthwith, so we may pray over her. He replied:—'Tis well; and I left him to lay her out and came hither, that I might tell you the news." The Prince of True Believers laughed and said, "Tell it again and again to thy lady Little-wits." When the Lady Zubaydah heard Masrur's words and those of the Caliph she was wroth and said, "None is little of wit save he who believeth a black slave." And she abused Masrur, whilst the Commander of the Faithful laughed; and the Eunuch, vexed at this, said to the Caliph, "He spake sooth who said:—Women are little of wits and lack religion.[3]"

1 This is to show the cleverness of Abu al-Hasan, who had calculated upon the difference between Al-Rashid and Zubaydah. Such marvels of perspicacity are frequent enough in the folk-lore of the Arabs.

2 An artful touch, showing how a tale grows by repetition. In Abu al-Hasan's case (*infra*) the eyes are swollen by the swathes.

3 A Hadis attributed to the Prophet, and very useful to Moslem husbands when wives differ overmuch from them in opinion.

Then said the Lady Zubaydah to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou sportest and jestest with me, and this slave hoodwinketh me, the better to please thee; but I will send and see which of them be dead." And he answered, saying, "Send one who shall see which of them is dead." So the Lady Zubaydah cried out to an old duenna, and said to her, "Hie thee to the house of Nuzhat al-Fuad in haste and see who is dead and loiter not." And she used hard words to her.[1] So the old woman went out running, whilst the Prince of True Believers and Masrur laughed, and she ceased not running till she came into the street. Abu al-Hasan saw her, and knowing her, said to his wife, "O Nuzhat al-Fuad, meseemeth the Lady Zubaydah hath sent to us to see who is dead and hath not given credit to Masrur's report of thy death: accordingly, she hath despatched the old crone, her duenna, to discover the truth. So it behoveth me to be dead in my turn for the sake of thy credit with the Lady Zubaydah." Hereat he lay down and stretched himself out, and she covered him and bound his eyes and feet and sat in tears at his head. Presently the old woman came in to her and saw her sitting at Abu al-Hasan's head, weeping and recounting his fine qualities; and when she saw the old trot, she cried out and said to her, "See what hath befallen me! Indeed Abu al-Hasan is dead and hath left me lone and lorn!" Then she shrieked out and rent her raiment and said to the crone, "O my mother, how very good he was to me[2]!" Quoth the other, "Indeed thou art excused, for thou wast used to him and he to thee." Then she considered what Masrur had reported to the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah and said to her, "Indeed, Masrur goeth about to cast discord between the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah." Asked Nuzhat al-Fuad, "And what is the cause of discord, O my mother?" and the other replied, "O my daughter, Masrur came to the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah and gave them news of thee that thou wast dead and that Abu al-Hasan was well." Nuzhat al-Fuad said to her "O naunty mine,[3] I was with my lady just now and she gave me an hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and now see my case and that which hath befallen me! Indeed, I am bewildered, and how shall I do, and I lone, and lorn? Would heaven I had died and he had lived!" Then she wept and with her wept the old woman,

1 Arab. "Masarat fi-há," which Lane renders, "And she threw money to her."

2 A saying common throughout the world, especially when the afflicted widow intends to marry again at the first opportunity.

3 Arab. "Yá Khálati" = O my mother's sister; addressed by a woman to an elderly dame.

who, going up to Abu al-Hasan and uncovering his face, saw his eyes bound and swollen for the swathing. So she covered him again and said, "Indeed, O Nuzhat al-Fuad, thou art afflicted in Abu al-Hasan!" Then she condoled with her and going out from her, ran along the street till she came into the Lady Zubaydah and related to her the story; and the Princess said to her, laughing, "Tell it over again to the Caliph, who maketh me out little of wit, and lacking of religion, and who made this ill-omened liar of a slave presume to contradict me." Quoth Masrur, "This old woman lieth; for I saw Abu al-Hasan well and Nuzhat al-Fuad it was who lay dead." Quoth the duenna, "'Tis thou that liest, and wouldst fain cast discord between the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah." And Masrur cried, "None lieth but thou, O old woman of ill-omen and thy lady believeth thee and she must be in her dotage." Whereupon the Lady Zubaydah cried out at him, and in very sooth she was enraged with him and with his speech and shed tears. Then said the Caliph to her, "I lie and my eunuch lieth, and thou liest and thy waiting-woman lieth; so 'tis my rede we go, all four of us together, that we may see which of us telleth the truth." Masrur said, "Come, let us go, that I may do to this ill-omened old woman evil deeds[1] and deal her a sound drubbing for her lying." And the duenna answered him, "O dotard, is thy wit like unto my wit? Indeed, thy wit is as the hen's wit." Masrur was incensed at her words and would have laid violent hands on her, but the Lady Zubaydah pushed him away from her and said to him, "Her truth-speaking will presently be distinguished from thy truth-speaking and her leasing from thy leasing." Then they all four arose, laying wagers one with other, and went forth a-foot from the palace-gate and hied on till they came in at the gate of the street where Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a dwelt. He saw them and said to his wife Nuzhat al-Fuad, "Verily, all that is sticky is not a pancake[2] they cook, nor every time shall the crock escape the shock. It seemeth the old woman hath gone and told her lady and acquainted her with our case and she hath disputed with Masrur the Eunuch and they have laid wagers each with other about our death and are come to us, all four, the Caliph and the Eunuch and the Lady Zubaydah and the old trot." When Nuzhat al-Fuad heard this, she started up from her outstretched posture and asked, "How shall we do?" whereto he answered, "We will both feign

1 *i.e.*, That I may put her to shame.
2 Arab. "Zalábiyah."

ourselves dead together and stretch ourselves out and hold our breath." So she hearkened unto him and they both lay down on the place where they usually slept the siesta[1] and bound their feet and shut their eyes and covered themselves with the veil and held their breath. Presently, up came the Caliph, Zubaydah, Masrur and the old woman, and entering, found Abu al-Hasan the Wag and wife both stretched out as dead; which when the Lady saw, she wept and said, "They ceased not to bring ill-news of my slave-girl till she died[2]; methinketh Abu al-Hasan's death was grievous to her and that she died after him.'" Quoth the Caliph, "Thou shalt not prevent me with thy prattle and prate. She certainly died before Abu al-Hasan, for he came to me with his raiment rent and his beard plucked out, beating his breast with two bits of unbaked brick,[4] and I gave him an hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to him, Go, bear her forth and I will give thee a bed-fellow other than she and handsomer, and she shall be in stead of her. But it would appear that her death was no light matter to him and he died after her[5]; so it is I who have beaten thee and gotten thy stake." The Lady Zubaydah answered him in words galore and the dispute between them waxed sore. At last the Caliph sat down at the heads of the pair and said, "By the tomb of the Apostle of Allah (whom may He save and assain!) and the sepulchres of my fathers and forefathers, whoso will tell me which of them died before the other, I will willingly give him a thousand dinars!" When Abu al-Hasan heard the Caliph's words, he sprang up in haste and said, "I died first, O Commander of the Faithful! Here with the thousand dinars acquit thee of thine oath and the swear thou sworest." Nuzhat al-Fuad rose also and stood up before the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah, who both rejoiced in this and in their safety, and the Princess chid her slave-girl. Then the Caliph and Zubaydah gave them joy of their well-being and knew that this death was a trick to get the gold; and the Lady said to

1 Arab. "'Alà al-Kaylah," which Mr. Payne renders by "Siesta-carpet" Lane reads "Kiblah" ("in the direction of the Kiblah") and notes that some Moslems turn the corpse's head towards Meccah and others the right side, including the face. So the old version reads "feet towards Mecca" But the preposition "Alà" requires the former sig.

2 Many places in this text are so faulty that translation is mere guess-work; *e g*, "Bashárah" can hardly be applied to ill-news.

3 *i.e.*, of grief for his loss.

4 Arab. "Tobáni" which Lane renders "two clods." I have noted that the Tob (Span Adobe = At-Tob) is a sunbaked brick. Beating the bosom with such material is still common amongst Moslem mourners of the lower class and the hardness of the blow gives the measure of the grief.

5 *i.e*, of grief for her loss.

Nuzhat al-Fuad, "Thou shouldst have sought of me that which thou needest, without this fashion, and not have burned[1] my heart for thee." And she, "Verily, I was ashamed, O my lady." As for the Caliph, he swooned away for laughing and said, "O Abu al-Hasan, thou wilt never cease to be a wag and do peregrine things and prodigious!" Quoth he, "O Commander of the Faithful, this trick I played off for that the money which thou gavest me was exhausted, and I was ashamed to ask of thee again. When I was single, I could never keep money in hand; but since thou marriedst me to this damsel, if I possessed even thy wealth, I should lay it waste. Wherefore when all that was in my hand was spent, I wrought this sleight, so I might get of thee the hundred dinars and the piece of silk; and all this is an alms from our lord. But now make haste to give me the thousand dinars and acquit thee of thine oath." The Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah laughed and returned to the palace; and he gave Abu al-Hasan the thousand dinars saying, "Take them as a *douceur*[2] for thy preservation from death," whilst her mistress did the like with Nuzhat al-Fuad, honouring her with the same words. Moreover, the Caliph increased the Wag in his solde and supplies, and he and his wife ceased not to live in joy and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies, the Plunderer of palaces, and the Garnerer of graves.

THE CALIPH OMAR BIN ABD AL-AZIZ AND THE POETS.[3]

It is said that when the Caliphate devolved on Omar bin Abd al-Aziz[4] (of whom Allah accept), the poets resorted to him,

1 Arab. "Ihtirák" often used in the metaphorical sense of consuming, torturing.

2 Arab. "Haláwat," lit. = a sweetmeat, a gratuity, a thank-offering.

3 Bresl. Edit, vol. vi. pp. 182-188, Nights cccexxxii-cccexxxiv.

4 "The good Caliph" and the fifth of the Orthodox, the other four being Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali; and omitting the eight intervening, Hasan the grandson of the Prophet included. He was the 13th Caliph and 8th Ommiade A.H. 99-101 (= 717-720) and after a reign of three years he was poisoned by his kinsmen of the Banu Umayyah who hated him for his piety, asceticism, and severity in making them disgorge their ill-gotten gains. Moslem historians are unanimous in his praise. Europeans find him an *anachorète couronné, à froide et respectable figure*, who lacked the diplomacy of Mu'awiyah and the energy of Al-Hajjáj. His principal imitator was Al-Muhtadi bi'lláh, who longed for a return to the rare old days of Al-Islam

as they had been used to resort to the Caliphs before him, and abode at his door days and days, but he suffered them not to enter, till there came to him 'Adí bin Artah,[1] who stood high in esteem with him. Jarír[2] accosted him and begged him to crave admission for them to the presence; so Adi answered, "'Tis well"; and, going in to Omar, said to him, "The poets are at thy door and have been there days and days; yet hast thou not given them leave to enter, albeit their sayings abide[3] and their arrows from mark never fly wide." Quoth Omar, "What have I to do with the poets?" and quoth Adi, "O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (Abhak[4]!) was praised by a poet[5] and gave him largesse, and in him[6] is an exemplar to every Moslem." Quoth Omar, "And who praised him?" and quoth Adi, "'Abbás bin Mirdás[7] praised him, and he clad him with a suit and said, O Generosity,[8] cut off from me his tongue!" Asked the Caliph, "Dost thou remember what he said?" and Adi answered, "Yes." Rejoined Omar, "Then repeat it"; so Adi repeated[9]:—

1 Omar 'Adi bin Artah; governor of Kufah and Basrah under "the good Caliph."

2 Jarír al-Khatafah, one of the most famous of the "Islámi" poets, *i.e.*, those who wrote in the first century (A.H.) before the corruption of language began. (See Terminal Essay, vol. viii. ante.) Ibn Khallikan notices him at full length i. 294.

3 Arab. "Bákiyah," which may also mean eternal as opposed to "Fániyah" = temporal. Omar's answer shows all the narrow-minded fanaticism which distinguished the early Moslems: they were puritanical as any Praise-God-Barebones, and they hated "boetry and bainting" as hotly as any Hanoverian.

4 The Saturday Review (Jan. 2, '86), which has honoured me by the normal reviling in the shape of a critique upon my first two vols., complains of the "Curious word Abhak" as "a perfectly arbitrary and unusual group of Latin letters." May I ask Aristarchus how he would render "Sal'am," (vol. i. night xxxvi.,) which apparently he would confine to "Arabic MSS." (!). Or would he prefer to A(llah) b(less) h(im) a(nd) k(eep) "W. G. B." (whom God bless) as proposed by the editor of Ockley? But where would be the poor old "Saturnine" if obliged to do better than the authors it abuses?

5 He might have said "by more than one, including the great Labíd."

6 Fi-hi, either "in him" (Mohammed), or "in it" (his action).

7 Chief of the Banu Sulaym. According to Tabari, Abbas bin Mirdas (a well-known poet), being dissatisfied with the booty allotted to him by the Prophet, refused it and lampooned Mohammed, who said to Ali, "Cut off this tongue which attacketh me," *i.e.*, "Silence him by giving what will satisfy him." Thereupon Ali doubled the Satirist's share.

8 Arab. "Yá Bilál": Bilál ibn Rabah was the Prophet's freedman and crier: see vol. ii. night cxliv. But *bilal* also signifies "moisture" or "beneficence," "benefits": it may be intended for a double entendre but I prefer the metonymy.

9 The verses of this Kasidah are too full of meaning to be easily translated: it is fine old poetry.

I saw thee, O thou best of human race, * Bring out a Book which brought to graceless Grace.
Thou showedst righteous road to men astray * From Right, when darkest wrong had ta'en its place;—
Thou with Islám didst light the gloomiest way, * Quenching with proof live coals of frowardness;
I own for Prophet mine Mohammed's self; * And man's award upon his word we base;
Thou madest straight the path that crooked ran, * Where in old days foul growth o'ergrew its face.
Exalt be thou in Joy's empyrean * And Allah's glory ever grow apace.

And indeed (continued Adi), this Elegy on the Prophet (Abhak!) is well known and to comment it would be tedious." Quoth Omar, "Who is at the door?" and quoth Adi, "Among them is Omar ibn Abi Rabí'ah, the Korashí[1]"; whereupon the Caliph cried, "May Allah show him no favour neither quicken him! Was it not he who said these verses:—

Would Heaven what day Death shall visit me * I smell as the foulest parts of thee[2] smell!
Could I in my clay-bed on Salmá lie * There to me were better than Heaven or Hell!

Had he not been (continued the Caliph) the enemy of Allah, he had wished for her in this world, so he might after repent and return to righteous dealing. By Allah, he shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?" Quoth Adi, "Jamíl bin Ma'mar al-Uzri[3] is at the door"; and quoth Omar, "'Tis he who saith in one of his elegies:—

Would Heaven conjoint we lived, and if I die * Death only grant me a grave within her grave:
For I'd no longer deign to live my life * If cold upon her head is laid the pave.[4]"

Quoth Omar, "Away with him from me! Who is at the door?" and quoth Adi, "Kuthayyir 'Azzah[5]"; whereupon Omar cried, "'Tis he who saith in one of his odes:—

1 *i.e.*, of the Koraysh tribe. For his disorderly life see Ibn Khallikan ii. 372: he died however, a holy death, battling against the Infidels in A.H. 93 (= 711-12), some five years before Omar's reign.

2 Arab. "Bayn farsi-k wa 'l-dami." *i.e.*, alluding to his mistress's person.

3 "Jamíl the Poet," and lover of Buthaynah: see vol. ii, night xlix., Ibn Khallikan (i. 331), and Al-Mas'udi (vi. 381), who quotes him copiously. He died A H. 82 (=701), or sixteen years before Omar's reign.

4 Arab. "Safih" = the slab over the grave.

5 A contemporary and friend of Jamíl and the famous lover of Azzah: See vol. ii, night xlix., and Al-Mas'udi, vi. 426. The word "Kuthayyir" means "the dwarf." Term. Essay.

Some talk of faith and creed and nothing else * And wait for pains of Hell in prayer-seat;[1]

But did they hear what I from Azzah heard, * They'd make prostration, fearful, at her feet.

Leave the mention of him. Who is at the door?" Quoth Adi, "Al-Ahwas al-'Ansárí.[2]" Cried Omar, "Allah Almighty put him away and estrange him from His mercy! Is it not he who said, berhyming on a Madinite's slave-girl, so she might outlive her lord:—

Allah be judge betwixt me and her lord! * Who ever flies with her and I pursue.

He shall not come in to me. Who is at the door, other than he?" Adi replied, "Hammám bin Ghálib al-Farazdak[3]"; and Omar said, "'Tis he who saith, glorying in whoring:—

Two girls let me down eighty fathoms deep, * As low sweeps the falcon wi' pinions spread;

And cried, as my toes touched the ground, "Dost live * To return, or the fall hath it done thee dead?

He shall not come in to me. Who is at the door, other than he?" Adi replied, "Al-Akhtal al-Taghlibí[4]" and Omar said, "He is the Miscreant who saith in his singing:—

Ramazan I ne'er fasted in life-time; nay * I ate flesh in public at undurn day[5];

Nor chide I the fair, save in way of love, * Nor seek Meccah's plain[6] in salvation-way:

Nor stand I praying like rest who cry * "Hie salvationwards[7]" at the dawn's first ray.

But I drink her cooled[8] by fresh Northern breeze * And my head at dawn to her prone I lay.[9]

1 *i.e.*, in the attitude of prayer.

2 In Bresl. Edit "Al-Akhwass," clerical error noticed in Ibn Khallikan, i. 526. His satires banished him to Dahlak Island in the Red Sea, and he died A H 179 (= 795-6)

3 Another famous poet Abú Firás Hammám or Humaym (dimin. form), as debauched as Jarir, who died forty days before him in A.H. 110 (= 728-29), at Basrah. Cf Term Essay.

4 A famous Christian poet See C. de Perceval, Journ. Asiat. April, 1834, Ibn Khallikan iii. 136, and Term. Essay.

5 The poet means that unlike other fasters he eats meat openly. See Pilgrimage (i. 110), for the popular hypocrisy

6 Arab. "Bathá," the lowlands and plains outside the Meccan Valley: See Al-Mas'udi, vi 157. Mr. (now Sir) W. Muir in his Life of Mahomet, vol i, p. ccv., remarks upon my Pilgrimage (iii. 252) that in placing Arafat 12 miles from Meccah, I had given 3 miles to Muna, + 3 to Muzdalifah + 3 to Arafat=9. But the total does not include the suburbs of Meccah and the breadth of the Arafat-Valley.

7 The words of the Azán, vol. i. 306.

8 Wine in Arabic is feminine, "Shamúl" = liquor hung in the wind to cool, a favourite Arab practice often noticed by the poets.

9 *i.e.*, I will fall down dead drunk.

By Allah, he treadeth no carpet of mine! Who is at the door, other than he?" Said Adi, "Jarír ibn al-Khatafah"; and Omar cried, "'Tis he who saith:—

But for ill-spying glances had our eyes espied * Eyne of the antelope and ringlets of the Reems.[1]
A Huntress of the eyes[2] by night-tide came and I * Cried, "Turn in peace, no time for visit this, meseems!

An it must be and no help, admit Jarir." So Adi went forth and admitted Jarir, who entered, saying:—

Yea, he who sent Mohammed unto man, * A just successor for Imám[3] assigned.
His ruth and justice all mankind embrace, * To daunt the bad and stablish well-designed.
Verily now I look to present good, * For man has ever transient weal in mind.

Quoth Omar, "O Jarir, keep the fear of Allah before thine eyes and say naught save the sooth." And Jarir recited these couplets:—

How many widows loose the hair in far Yamámah-land[4] * How many an orphan there abides feeble of voice and eye,
Since faredst thou who wast to them instead of father lost * When they like nested fledglings were sans power to creep or fly!
And now we hope, since brake the clouds their word and troth with us, * Hope from the Caliph's grace to gain a rain[5] that ne'er shall dry.

When the Caliph heard this, he said "By Allah, O Jarir, Omar possesseth but an hundred dirhams.[6] Ho boy! do thou give them to him." Moreover, he gifted him with the ornaments of his sword; and Jarir went forth to the other poets, who asked him, "What is behind thee[7]?" and he answered, "A man who giveth to the poor and denieth the poets, and with him I am well-pleased."

1 Arab. "Árám," plu. of Irm, a beautiful girl, a white deer. The word is connected with the Heb. Reem (Deut. xxxiii. 17), which has been explained unicorn, rhinoceros, and aurochs. It is the Ass. Rimu, the wild bull of the mountains, provided with a human face, and placed at the palace-entrance to frighten away foes, demon or human.

2 *i.e.*, she who ensnares [all] eyes.

3 *Imam*, the spiritual title or the Caliph, as head of the Faith and leader (lit. "foreman," Antistes) of the people at prayer. See vol. iii., night cclxxv.

4 For Yamámah see vol. ii., night xlix. Omar bin Abd al-Aziz was governor of the province before he came to the Caliphate. To the note on Zarká, the blue-eyed Yamamite, I may add that Marwan was called Ibn Zarká, son of "la femme au drapeau bleu," such being the sign of a public prostitute. Al-Mas'udi, v. 509.

5 Rain and bounty, I have said, are synonymous.

6 About £2 10s.

7 *i.e.*, what is thy news.

AL-HAJJAJ AND THE THREE YOUNG MEN.[1]

THEY tell that Al-Hajjáj[2] once bade the Chief of Police go his rounds about Bassorah city by night, and whomsoever he found abroad after supper-tide that he should smite his neck. So he went round one night of the nights and came upon three youths swaying and staggering from side to side, and on them signs of wine-bibbing. So the watch laid hold of them and the captain said to them, "Who be you that ye durst transgress the commandment of the Commander of the Faithful[3] and come abroad at this hour?" Quoth one of the youths, "I am the son of him to whom all necks[4] abase themselves, alike the nose-pierced of them and the breaker; they come to him in their own despite, abject and submissive, and he taketh of their wealth and of their blood." The Master of Police held his hand from him, saying, "Belike he is of the kinsmen of the Prince of True Believers," and said to the second, "Who art thou?" Quoth he, "I am the son of him whose rank[5] Time abaseth not, and if it be lowered one day, 'twill assuredly return to its former height; thou seest the folk crowd in troops to the light of his fire, some standing around it and some sitting." So the Chief of Police refrained

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. vi. pp. 188-9, night cccclxxxiv.

2 Of this masterful personage and his *énergie indomptable* I have spoken in vol. ii night ccxxxvii. and other places. I may add that he built Wásit city, A.H. 83 and rendered eminent services to literature and civilization amongst the Arabs. When the Ommiade Caliph Abd al-Malik was dying he said to his son Walid, "Look to Al-Hajjaj and honour him, for, verily, he it is who hath covered for you the pulpits; and he is thy sword and thy right hand against all opponents; thou needest him more than he needeth thee and when I die summon the folk to the covenant of allegiance; and he who saith with his head—thus, say thou with thy sword—thus!" (Al-Siyuti, p. 225) yet the historian simply observes, "the Lord curse him."

3 *i.e.*, given through his lieutenant.

4 "Necks" per synecdochen for heads. The passage is a description of a barber-surgeon in a series of double-entendres; the "nose-pierced" (Makhzúm) is the subject who is led by the nose like a camel with halter and ring, and the "breaker" (háshim) may be a breaker of bread as the word originally meant, or breaker of bones. Lastly the "wealth" (mál) is a recondite allusion to the hair.

5 Arab. "Kadr" with a change of vowel makes "Kidr" = a cooking-pot. The description is that of an itinerant seller of boiled beans (Fúl mudammas) still common in Cairo. The "light of his fire" suggests a double-entendre, some powerful Chief like masterful King Kulayb. See vol. i. night xlv.

from slaying him and asked the third, "Who art thou?" He answered, "I am the son of him who plungeth through the ranks[1] with his might and levelleth them with the sword, so that they stand straight: his feet are not loosed from the stirrup, whenas the horsemen on the day of the battle are a-weary." So the Master of Police held his hand from him also, saying, "Belike, he is the son of a Brave of the Arabs." Then he kept them under guard, and when the morning morrowed he referred their case to Al-Hajjaj, who caused bring them before him and enquiring into their affair, when behold, the first was the son of a barber-surgeon, the second of a bean-seller, and the third of a weaver. So he marvelled at their eloquent readiness of speech and said to the men of his assembly, "Teach your sons the rhetorical use of Arabic[2]: for, by Allah, but for their ready wit, I had smitten off their heads!"

HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE WOMAN OF THE BARMECIDES.[3]

THEY tell[4] that Harun Al-Rashid was sitting one day to abate grievances, when there came up to him a woman and said, "O Commander of the Faithful, may Allah perfect thy purpose and gladden thee in whatso He hath given thee and increase thee in elevation! Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably.[5]" Quoth the Caliph to those who were present with him, "Know ye what this one meaneth by her saying?" and quoth they, "Of a surety, she meaneth not otherwise than well, O Prince of True Believers." Al-Rashid rejoined; "Nay, in this she pur-

1 Arab. "Al-Sufúf," either ranks of fighting-men or the rows of threads on a loom. Here the allusion is to a weaver who levels and corrects his threads with the wooden spathe and shuttle governing warp and weft and who makes them stand straight (behave aright). The "stirrup" (rikáb) is the loop of cord in which the weaver's foot rests

2 "Adab." See vol. i. night xiii., and vol. vii night dcccclii.

3 Bresl. Edit., vol. vi. pp. 189-191, night cccxxxiv.

4 Arab. "Za'mú," a word little used in the Cal., Mac, or Bul Edits; or in the Wortley Montague MS.; but very common in the Bresl text.

5 More double-entendres "Thou hast done justice" ('adalta) also means "Thou hast swerved from right"; and "Thou hast wrought equitably" (Akasta iv of Kast) = "Thou hast transgressed."

p^seth only to curse me. As for her saying, 'Allah perfect thy purpose,' she hath taken it from the saying of the poet:—

*When thy purpose is effected beginneth its decay; * When they say*
'Thy wish is won' feel thou sure 'twill pass away.

As for her saying 'Allah gladden thee in whatso He hath given thee,' she took it from the saying of Almighty Allah,[1] 'Till, whenas they were gladdened in that which they were given, We suddenly laid hold of them and lo, they were in despair!' As for her saying, 'Allah increase thee in elevation!' she took it from the saying of the poet:—

*'No flier flieth however tall * but as he flieth shall come to fall.'*

And as for her saying, 'Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably,' 'tis from the saying of the Almighty, 'if ye swerve[2] or lag behind or turn aside, verily, Allah of that which ye do is well aware'; and 'As for the swervers[3] they are fuel for Hell.'" Then he turned to the woman and asked her, "Is it not thus?" Answered she; "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," and quoth he, "What prompted thee to this?" Quoth she, "Thou slewest my parents and my kinsfolk and despoiledst their good." Enquired the Caliph, "Whom meanest thou?" and she replied, "I am of the house of Barmak." Then said he to her, "As for the dead, they are of those who are past away, and it booteth not to speak of them; but, as for that which I took of wealth, it shall forthright be restored to thee, yea, and more than it." And he was bountiful to her to the uttermost of his bounties.

THE TEN WAZIRS; OR THE HISTORY OF KING AZÁDBAKHT AND HIS SON.[4]

THERE was once, of old days, a king of the kings, whose name

1 Koran vi. 44. Allah is threatening unbelievers, "And when they had forgotten their warnings We set open to them the gates of all things, until, when they were gladdened," etc.

2 Arab. "Ta'dilú" also meaning, "Ye do injustice"; quoted from Koran iv 134.

3 Arab. "Al-Kásitúna" before explained. Koran lxxii. 15.

4 Bresl. Edit. vol. vi. pp. 191-343, nights ccccxxxv-ccccIxxxvii. This is the old Persian Bakhtyár Námeh, *i. e.*, the Book of Bakhtyar, so called from the prince and hero "Fortune's Friend." In the tale of Jili'ad and Shimas the number of Wazirs is seven, as usual in the Sindibad cycle Here we have the full tale as advised by the Imám al-Jara'i: "it is meet for a man before

was Azádbakht; his capital was hight Kunaym Madúd[1] and his kingdom extended to the confines of Sístán[2] and from the confines of Hindostan to the Indian Ocean. He had ten Wazirs, who ordered his kingship and his dominion, and he was possessed of judgment and exceeding wisdom. One day he went forth with certain of his guards to the chase and fell in with an Eunuch riding a mare and hending in hand the halter of a she-mule, which he led along. On the mule's back was a domed litter of brocade purfled with gold and girded with an embroidered band set with pearls and gems, and about it was a company of Knights. When King Azadbakht saw this, he separated himself from his suite and, making for the horsemen and that mule, questioned them, saying, "To whom belongeth this litter and what is therein?" The Eunuch answered, (for he knew not that the speaker was King Azadbakht) saying, "This litter belongeth to Isfahand, Wazir to King Azadbakht, and therein is his daughter, whom he is minded to marry to the King hight Zád Sháh." As the Eunuch was speaking with the king, behold, the maiden

entering upon important undertakings to consult ten intelligent friends; if we have only five, to apply twice to each, if only one, ten times at different visits, and if none, let him repair to his wife and consult her, and whatever she advises him to do let him do the clear contrary" (quoting Omar), or as says Tommy Moore,

> Whene'er you're in doubt, said a sage I once knew,
> 'Twixt two lines of conduct which course to pursue,
> Ask a woman's advice, and whate'er she advise
> Do the very reverse, and you're sure to be wise.

The Romance of the Ten Wazirs occurs in dislocated shape in the "Nouveaux Contes Arabes, ou Supplément aux Mille et une Nuits, etc., par M. l'Abbé * * * Paris, 1788. It is the "Story of Bohetzad (Bakht-zád =Luck-born, v p.), and his Ten Viziers," in vol. iii, pp 2-30 of the "Arabian Tales," etc., published by Dom Chavis and M. Cazotte, in 1785; a copy of the English translation by Robert Heron, Edinburgh, 1792, I owe to the kindness of Mr Leonard Smithers, of Sheffield It appears also in vol. viii of M. C. de Perceval's Edition of the Nights; in Gauttier's Edition (vol vi.), and as the "Historia Decem Vizirorum et filii Regis Azad-bacht," text and translation by Gustav Knos, of Goettingen (1807). For the Turkish, Malay, and other versions, see (p xxxviii. etc) "The Bakhtiyār Nāma," etc Edited (from the Sir William Ouseley's version of 1801) by Mr. W. A Clouston and privately printed, London, 1883. The notes are valuable but their worth is sadly injured by the want of an index. I am pleased to see that Mr. E J. W. Gibb is publishing the "History of the Forty Vezirs; or, the Story of the Forty Morns and Eves," written in Turkish by "Sheykh-Zadah," evidently a nom de plume (for Ahmad al-Misri?), and translated from an Arabic MS. which probably dated about the xvth century.

1 In Chavis and Cazotte, the "kingdom of Dineroux (comprehending all Syria and the isles of the Indian Ocean) whose capital was Issessara." An article in the Edinburgh Review (July, 1886), calls the "Supplement" a "bare-faced forgery"; but evidently the writer should have "read up" his subject before writing.

2 The Persian form; in Arab. Sijistán, the classical Drangiana or province East of Fars = Persia proper. It is famed in legend as the feof of hero Rustam.

raised a corner of the curtain that shut in the litter, so she might look upon the speaker, and saw the king. When Azadbakht beheld her and noted her fashion and her loveliness, (and indeed never did seer[1] espy her like,) his soul inclined to her and she took hold upon his heart and he was ravished by her sight. So he said to the Eunuch, "Turn the mule's head and return, for I am King Azadbakht and in very sooth I will marry her myself, inasmuch as Isfahand her sire is my Wazir and he will accept of this affair and it will not be hard to him." Answered the Eunuch, "O king, Allah prolong thy continuance, have patience till I acquaint my lord her parent, and thou shalt wed her in the way of consent, for it besitteth thee not, neither is it seemly for thee, to seize her on this wise, seeing that it will be an affront to her father an thou take her without his knowledge." Quoth Azadbakht, "I have not patience to wait till thou repair to her sire and return, and no shame will betide him, if I marry her." And quoth the eunuch, "O my lord, naught that in haste is done long endureth nor doth the heart rejoice therein; and indeed it behoveth thee not to take her on this unseemly wise. Whatsoever betideth thee, destroy not thyself with haste, for I know that her sire's breast will be straitened by this affair and this that thou dost will not win thy wish." But the king said, "Verily, Isfahand is my Mameluke and a slave of my slaves, and I reck not of her father, an he be fain or unfain." So saying, he drew the reins of the mule and carrying the damsel, whose name was Bahrjaur,[2] to his house married her. Meanwhile, the Eunuch betook himself, he and the knights to her sire and said to him, "O my lord, thou hast served the king many years' service and thou hast not failed him a single day; and now he hath taken thy daughter without thy consent and permission." And he related to him what had passed and how the king had seized her by force. When Isfahand heard the eunuch's words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and assembling many troops, said to them, "Whenas the king was occupied with his women[3] we took no reck of him; but now he putteth out his hand to our Harim; wherefore 'tis my rede that we look us out a place wherein we may have sanctuary." Then he wrote a letter to King Azadbakht, say-

1 Arab *Ráwi* = a professional tale-teller, which Mr Payne justly holds to be a clerical error for "*Rái*, a beholder, one who seeth"

2 In Persian the name would be Bahr-i-Jaur = "luck" (or fortune, "bahr") of Jaur- (or Júr-) city.

3 Supply "and cared naught for his kingdom"

ing to him, "I am a Mameluke of thy Mamelukes and a slave of thy slaves and my daughter at thy service is a hand-maid, and Almighty Allah prolong thy days and appoint thy times to be in joy and gladness! Indeed, I went ever waist-girded in thy service and in caring to conserve thy dominion and warding off from thee all thy foes; but now I abound yet more than erewhile in zeal and watchfulness, because I have taken this charge upon myself, since my daughter is become thy wife." And he despatched a courier to the king with the letter and a present. When the messenger came to King Azadbakht and he read the letter and the present was laid before him, he rejoiced with joy exceeding and occupied himself with eating and drinking, hour after hour. But the chief Wazir of his Wazirs came to him and said, "O king, know that Isfahand the Wazir is thine enemy, for that his soul liketh not that which thou hast done with him, and this message he hath sent thee is a trick; so rejoice thou not therein, neither be thou misled by the sweets of his say and the softness of his speech." The king hearkened to his Wazir's speech, but presently made light of the matter and busied himself with that which he was about of eating and drinking, pleasuring and merrymaking. Meanwhile, Isfahand the Wazir wrote a letter and sent it to all the Emirs, acquainting them with that which had betided him from King Azadbakht and how he had forced his daughter, adding, "And indeed he will do with you more than he hath done with me." When the letter reached the chiefs,[1] they all assembled together to Isfahand and said to him, "What was his affair[2]?" Accordingly he discovered to them the matter of his daughter and they all agreed, of one accord, to strive for the slaughter of the king; and, taking horse with their troops, they set out to seek him. Azadbakht knew naught till the noise of the revolt beset his capital city, when he said to his wife Bahrjaur, "How shall we do?" She answered, "Thou knowest best and I am at thy commandment"; so he bade fetch two swift horses and bestrode one himself, whilst his wife mounted the other. Then they took what they could of gold and went forth, flying through the night to the desert of Karmán[3]; while Isfahand

1 Arab. "Atráf," plur. of "Tarf," a great and liberal lord.

2 Lit. "How was," etc. Kayf is a favourite word not only in the Bresl. Edit., but throughout Egypt and Syria. Classically we should write "Má"; vulgarly "Aysh."

3 Karmania vulg. and fancifully derived from Kirmán Pers. = worms because the silkworm is supposed to have been bred there, but the name is of far older date as we find the Asiatic Æthiopians of Herodotus (iii 93) lying between the Germanii (Karman) and the Indus Also Karmania appears in Strabo and Sinus Carmanicus in other classics.

entered the city and made himself king. Now King Azadbakht's wife was big with child and the labour pains took her in the mountain; so they alighted at the foot, by a spring of water, and she bare a boy as he were the moon. Bahrjaur his mother pulleth off a coat of gold-woven brocade and wrapped the child therein, and they passed the night in that place, she giving him the breast till morning. Then said the king to her, "We are hampered by this child and cannot abide here nor can we carry him with us; so methinks we had better leave him in this stead and wend our ways, for Allah is able to send him one who shall take him and rear him." So they wept over him with exceeding sore weeping and left him beside the fountain, wrapped in that coat of brocade; then they laid at his head a thousand gold pieces in a bag and mounting their horses, fared forth and fled. Now, by the ordinance of the Most High Lord, a company of highway robbers fell upon a caravan hard by that mountain and despoiled them of what was with them of merchandise. Then they betook themselves to the high lands, so they might share their loot, and looking at the foot thereof, espied the coat of brocade: so they descended to see what it was, and behold, it was a boy wrapped therein and the gold laid at his head. They marvelled and said, "Praised be Allah! By what misdeed cometh this child here?" Thereupon they divided the money between them and the captain[1] of the highwaymen took the boy and made him his son and fed him with sweet milk and dates,[2] till he came to his house, when he appointed a nurse for rearing him. Meanwhile, King Azadbakht and his wife stayed not in their flight till they came to the court of the King of Fars, whose name was Kisra.[3] When they presented themselves to him, he honoured them with all honour and entertained them with handsomest entertainment, and Azadbakht told him his tale from incept to conclusion. So he gave him a mighty power and wealth galore and he abode with him some days till he was rested, when he made ready with his host and setting out for his own dominions, waged war with Isfahand and falling in upon the capital, defeated the whilome Minister and slew him. Then he entered the city and sat down on the throne of his kingship; and whenas he was rested and his kingdom waxed peaceful for him, he

1 Arab. "Ka'id"; lit. = one who sits with, a colleague, hence the Span. Alcayde; in Marocco it is = colonel, and is prefixed *e.g.*, Ka'id Maclean.

2 A favourite food; Al-Hariri calls the dates and cream, which were sold together in bazars, the "Proud Rider on the desired Steed"

3 In Bresl. Edit vi. 198, by misprint "Kutrú": Chavis and Cazotte have "Kassera." In the story of Bihkard we find a P.N. "Yatrú."

despatched messengers to the mountain aforesaid in search of the child; but they returned and informed the king that they had not found him. As time ran on, the boy, the son of the king, grew up and fell to cutting the way[1] with the highwaymen, and they used to carry him with them, whenever they went banditting. They sallied forth one day upon a caravan in the land of Sistan, and there were in that caravan strong men and valiant, and with them a mighty store of merchandise. Now they had heard that in that land banditti abounded: so they gathered themselves together and gat ready their weapons and sent out spies, who returned and gave them news of the plunderers. Accordingly, they prepared for battle, and when the robbers drew near the caravan, they fell upon them and the twain fought a sore fight. At last the caravan-folk overmastered the highwaymen by dint of numbers, and slew some of them, whilst the others fled. They also took the boy, the son of King Azadbakht, and seeing him as he were the moon, a model of beauty and loveliness, bright of face and engraced with grace, asked him, "Who is thy father, and how camest thou with these banditti?" And he answered, saying, "I am the son of the Captain of the highwaymen." So they seized him and carried him to the capital of his sire, King Azadbakht. When they reached the city, the king heard of their coming and commanded that they should attend him with what befitted of their goods. Accordingly they presented themselves before him, and the boy with them, whom when the king saw, he asked them, "To whom belongeth this boy?" and they answered, "O King, we were going on such a road, when there came out upon us a sort of robbers; so we fought them and beat them off and took this boy prisoner. Then we questioned him, saying, Who is thy sire? and he replied, I am the son of the robber-captain." Quoth the king, "I would fain have this boy"; and quoth the captain of the caravan, "Allah maketh thee gift of him, O king of the age, and we all are thy slaves." Then the king (who was not aware that the boy was his son) dismissed the caravan and bade carry the lad into his palace and he became as one of the pages, while his sire the king still knew not that he was his child. As the days rolled on the king observed in him good breeding and understanding and handiness galore and he pleased him; so he committed his treasuries to his charge and shortened the Wazirs' hand therefrom, commanding that naught should be taken forth save by leave of the youth. On this wise he abode a number of

1 *i.e.*, waylaying travellers, a term which has often occurred.

years and the king saw in him only good conduct and the habit of righteousness. Now the treasuries had been aforetime in the hands of the Wazirs to do with them whatso they would, and when they came under the youth's hand, that of the Ministers was shortened from them, and he became dearer than a son to the king who could not support being separated from him. When the Wazirs saw this, they were jealous of him and envied him and sought a device against him whereby they might oust him from the King's eye,[1] but found no means. At last, when Fate descended,[2] it chanced that the youth one day of the days drank wine and became drunken and wandered from his right wits; so he fell to going round about within the king's palace and Destiny led him to the lodging of the women, in which there was a little sleeping chamber, where the king lay with his wife. Thither came the youth and entering the dormitory, found there a spread couch, to wit, a sleeping place: so he cast himself on the bed, marvelling at the paintings that were in the chamber, which was lighted by one waxen taper. Presently he fell asleep and slumbered heavily till eventide, when there came a handmaid, bringing with her as of wont all the dessert, eatables and drinkables, usually made ready for the king and his wife, and seeing the youth lying on his back, (and none knowing of his case and he in his drunkenness unknowing where he was,) thought that he was the king asleep on his couch; so she set the censing-vessel and laid the perfumes by the bedding, then shut the door and went her ways. Soon after this, the king arose from the wine-chamber and taking his wife by the hand, repaired with her to the chamber in which he slept. He opened the door and entered when, lo and behold! he saw the youth lying on the bed, whereupon he turned to his wife and said to her, "What doth this youth here? This fellow cometh not hither save on thine account." Said she, "I have no knowledge of him." Hereupon the youth awoke and seeing the king, sprang up and prostrated himself before him, and Azadbakht said to him, "O vile of birth,[3] O traitor of unworth, what hath driven thee to my dwelling?" And he bade imprison him in one place and the Queen in another.

1 *i.e.*, the royal favour.

2 *i.e.*, When the fated hour came down (from Heaven).

3 As the nights have proved in many places, the Asl (origin) of a man is popularly held to influence his conduct throughout life. So the Jeweller's wife (vol ix.) was of servile birth, which accounted for her vile conduct; and reference is hardly necessary to a host of other instances. We can trace the same idea in the sayings and folk-lore of the West, *e.g.*, Bon sang ne peut mentir, etc., etc.

The First Day.

OF THE USELESSNESS OF ENDEAVOUR AGAINST PERSISTENT ILL FORTUNE.

WHEN the morning morrowed and the king sat on the throne of his kingship, he summoned his Grand Wazir, the Premier of all his Ministers, and said to him, "How seest thou the deed this robber-youth hath done[1]? He hath entered my Harim and lain down on my couch and I fear lest there be an object between him and the woman. What deemest thou of the affair?" Said the Wazir, "Allah prolong the king's continuance! What sawest thou in this youth[2]? Is he not ignoble of birth, the son of thieves? Needs must a thief revert to his vile origin, and whoso reareth the serpent's brood shall get of them naught but biting. As for the woman, she is not at fault; since from time ago until now, nothing appeared from her except good breeding and modest bearing; an at this present, an the king give me leave, I will go to her and question her, so I may discover to thee the affair." The king gave him leave for this and the Wazir went to the Queen and said to her, "I am come to thee, on account of a grave shame, and I would fain have thee soothfast with me in speech and tell me how came the youth into the sleeping-chamber." Quoth she, "I have no knowledge whatsoever of it, no, none at all," and sware to him a binding oath to that intent, whereby he knew that the woman had no inkling of the affair, nor was in fault, and said to her, "I will shew thee a sleight, wherewith thou mayest acquit thyself and thy face be whitened before the king." Asked she, "What is it?" and he answered, "When the king calleth for thee and questioneth thee of this, say thou to him:—Yonder youth saw me in the boudoir-chamber, and sent me a message, saying:—I will give thee an hundred grains of gem for whose price money may not suffice, so thou wilt suffer me to enjoy thee. I laughed at him who bespake me with such proposal and rebuffed him; but he sent again to me saying:—An thou consent not thereto, I will come one of the nights, drunken, and enter and lie down in the sleeping-chamber, and the king will see me and slay me; so wilt thou be put to shame and thy face shall be blackened

1 *i.e.*, "What deemest thou he hath done?"
2 The apodosis wanting "to make thee trust in him?"

with him and thine honour dishonoured. Be this thy saying to the king, and I will fare to him forthright, and repeat this to him." Quoth the Queen, "And I also will say thus." Accordingly, the Minister returned to the king and said to him, "Verily, this youth hath merited grievous pains and penalties after the abundance of thy bounty, and no kernel which is bitter can ever wax sweet[1]; but, as for the woman, I am certified that there is no default in her." Thereupon he repeated to the king the story which he had taught the Queen, which when Azadbakht heard, he rent his raiment and bade the youth be brought. So they fetched him and set him before the king, who bade summon the Sworder, and the folk all fixed their eyes upon the youth, to the end that they might see what the sovran should do with him. Then said Azadbakht to him (and his words were words of anger and the speech of the youth was reverent and well-bred), "I bought thee with my money and looked for fidelity from thee, wherefore I chose thee over all my Grandees and Pages and made thee Keeper of my treasuries. Why, then, hast thou outraged mine honour and entered my house and played traitor with me and lookest thou no thought of all I have done thee of benefits?" Replied the youth, "O king, I did this not of my choice and freewill and I had no business in being there; but, of the lack of my luck, I was driven thither, for that Fate was contrary and fair Fortune failed me. Indeed, I had endeavoured with all endeavour that naught of foulness should come forth me and I kept watch and ward over myself, lest default foreshow in me; and none may withstand an ill chance, nor doth striving profit against adverse Destiny, as appeareth by the example of the merchant who was stricken with ill luck and his endeavour availed him naught and he fell by the badness of his fortune." The king asked, "What is the story of the merchant and how was his luck changed upon him by the sorriness of his doom?" Answered the youth, "May Allah prolong the king's continuance!" and began

1 In the Braj Bákhá dialect of Hindi, we find quoted in the Aʿhlák-i-Hindi, "Tale of the old Tiger and the Traveller":—

Jo jáko paryo subháo jáe ná jio-sun;
Nim na mitho hoe sichh gur ghio-sun.

Ne'er shall his nature fail a man whate'er that nature be,
The Nim-tree bitter shall remain though drenched with Gur and Ghí.

The Nim (Melia Azadirachta) is the "Persian lilac," whose leaves, intensely bitter, are used as a preventive to poison: Gur is the Anglo-Indian Jaggeri = raw sugar and Ghi = clarified butter. Roebuck gives the same proverb in Hindostani.

THE STORY OF THE MERCHANT WHO LOST HIS LUCK.[1]

There was once a merchant man, who prospered in trade, and at one time his every dirham won him fifty. Presently, his luck turned against him and he knew it not; so he said to himself, "I have wealth galore, yet do I toil and travel from country to country; so better had I abide in my own land and rest myself in my own house from this travail and trouble and sell and buy at home." Then he made two parts of his money, and with one bought wheat in summer, saying "Whenas winter cometh, I shall sell it at a great profit." But, when the cold set in wheat fell to half the price for which he had purchased it, whereat he was concerned with sore chagrin and left it till the next year. However, the price then fell yet lower and one of his intimates said to him, "Thou hast no luck in this wheat; so do thou sell it at whatsoever price." Said the merchant, "Ah, long have I profited! so 'tis allowable that I lose this time. Allah is all-knowing! An it abide with me ten full years, I will not sell it save for a gaining bargain.[2]" Then he walled up in his anger the granary-door with clay, and by the ordinance of Allah Almighty, there came a great rain and descended from the terrace-roofs of the house wherein was the wheat so that the grain rotted; and the merchant had to pay the porters from his purse five hundred dirhams for them to carry it forth and cast it without the city, the smell of it having become fulsome. So his friend said to him, "How often did I tell thee thou hadst no luck in wheat? But thou wouldst not give ear to my speech, and now it behoveth thee to go to the astrologer[3] and question him of thine ascendant." Accordingly the trader betook himself to the astrologer and questioned him of his star, and astrophil said to him, "Thine ascendant is adverse. Put not forth thy hand to any business, for thou wilt not prosper thereby." However, he paid

1 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Kaskas; or the Obstinate Man." For ill-luck, see Miss Frere's "Old Deccan Days" (p 171), and Giles's "Strange Stories," &c (p 430), where the young lady says to Ma, "You often asked me for money, but on account of your weak luck I hitherto refrained from giving it"

2 True to life in the present day, as many a standing hay-rick has shown

3 The "Munajjim" is a recognised authority in Egyptian townlets, and in the village-republics of Southern India the "Jyoshi" is one of the paid officials.

no heed to the astrologer's words and said in himself, "If I do my business, I am not afraid of aught." Then he took the other half of his money, after he had spent the first in three years, and builded him a ship, which he loaded with a cargaison of whatso seemed good to him and all that was with him and embarked on the sea, so he might voyage questing gain. The ship remained in port some days, till he should be certified whither he would wend, and he said, "I will ask the traders what this merchandise profiteth, and in what land 'tis wanted, and how much can it gain." They directed him to a far country, where his dirham should produce an hundredfold. So he set sail and made for the land in question; but, as he went, there blew on him a furious gale, and the ship foundered. The merchant saved himself on a plank and the wind cast him up, naked as he was, on the sea-shore, where stood a town hard by. He praised Allah and gave Him thanks for his preservation; then, seeing a great village nigh hand, he betook himself thither and saw, seated therein, a very old man, whom he acquainted with his case and that which had betided him. The Shaykh grieved for him with sore grieving, when he heard his tale and set food before him. He ate of it and the old man said to him, "Tarry here with me, so I may make thee my overseer[1] and factor over a farm I have here, and thou shalt have of me five dirhams a day." Answered the merchant, "Allah make fair thy reward, and requite thee with His boons and bounties." So he abode in this employ, till he had sowed and reaped and threshed and winnowed, and all was clean in his hand and the Shaykh appointed neither agent nor inspector, but relied utterly upon him. Then the merchant bethought himself and said, "I doubt me the owner of this grain will never give me my due; so the better rede were to take of it after the measure of my wage; and if he give me my right, I will return to him that I have taken." So he laid hands upon the grain, after the measure of that which fell to him, and hid it in a hiding place. Then he carried the rest and meted it out to the old man, who said to him, "Come, take thy wage, for which I conditioned with thee, and sell the grain and buy with the price clothes and what not else; and though thou abide with me ten years, yet shalt thou still have this hire and I will acquit it to thee on this wise." Quoth the merchant in himself, "Indeed, I have done a foul deed by taking it without his permission." Then he went to

1 Arab "Amin" sub and adj. In India it means a Government employé who collects revenue; in Marocco a commissioner sent by His Sharifian Majesty.

fetch that which he had hidden of the grain, but found it not and returned, perplexed, sorrowful, to the Shaykh, who asked him, "What aileth thee to be mournful?" and he answered, "Methought thou wouldst not pay me my due; so I took of the grain, after the measure of my hire; and now thou hast paid me all my right and I went to bring back to thee that which I had hidden from thee, but found it gone, for those who had come upon it have stolen it." The Shaykh was wroth, when he heard these words, and said to the merchant, "There is no device against ill luck! I had given thee this, but, of the sorriness of thy doom and thy fortune, thou hast done this deed, O oppressor of thine own self! Thou deemedst I would not fulfil to thee thy wage; but, by Allah, nevermore will I give thee aught." Then he drove him away from him. So the merchant went forth, woeful, grieving, weeping-eyed, and wandered along the sea-shore, till he came to a sort of duckers[1] diving in the sea for pearls. They saw him weeping and wailing and said to him, "What is thy case and what garreth thee shed tears?" So he acquainted them with his history, from incept to conclusion, whereby the duckers knew him and asked him "Art thou Such-an-one, son of Such-an-one?" He answered "Yes"; whereupon they condoled with him and wept sore for him and said to him, "Abide here till we dive upon thy luck this next time and whatso betideth us shall be between us and thee.[2]" Accordingly, they ducked and brought up ten oyster-shells, in each two great unions: whereat they marvelled and said to him, "By Allah, thy luck hath re-appeared and thy good star is in the ascendant!" Then the pearl-fishers gave him the ten pearls and said to him, "Sell two of them and make them thy stock-in-trade: and hide the rest against the time of thy straitness." So he took them, joyful and contented, and applied himself to sewing eight of them in his gown, keeping the two others in his mouth; but a thief saw him and went and advertised his fellows of him; whereupon they gathered together upon him, and took his gown and departed from him. When they were gone away, he arose, saying, "The two unions I have will suffice me," and made for the nearest city, where he brought out the pearls for sale. Now as Destiny would have

1 Our older word for divers = Arab "Ghawwásún": a single pearl (in the text Jauhar = the Port. Aljofar) is called "habbah" = grain or seed

2 The kindly and generous deed of one Moslem to another, and by no means rare in real life.

it, a certain jeweller of the town had been robbed of ten unions, like those which were with the merchant; so, when he saw the two pearls in the broker's hand, he asked him, "To whom do these belong?" and the broker answered, "To yonder man." The jeweller, seeing the merchant in pauper case and clad in tattered clothes, suspected him and said to him, "Where be the other eight pearls?" The merchant thought he asked him of those which were in the gown, whenas the man had purposed only to surprise him into confession, and replied, "The thieves stole them from me." When the jeweller heard his reply, he was certified that it was the wight who had taken his good; so he laid hold of him and haling him before the Chief of Police, said to him, "This is the man who stole my unions: I have found two of them upon him and he confesseth to the other eight." Now the Wali knew of the theft of the pearls; so he bade throw the merchant into jail. Accordingly they imprisoned him and whipped him, and he lay in trunk a whole year, till, by the ordinance of Allah Almighty, the Chief of Police arrested one of the divers aforesaid, and imprisoned him in the prison where the merchant was jailed. The ducker saw him and knowing him, questioned him of his case; whereupon he told them his tale, and that which had befallen him; and the diver marvelled at the lack of his luck. So, when he came forth of the prison, he acquainted the Sultan with the merchant's case and told him that it was he who had given him the pearls. The Sultan bade bring him forth of the jail, and asked him of his story, whereupon he told him all that had befallen him, and the Sovran pitied him and assigned him a lodging in his own palace, together with pay and allowances for his support. Now the lodging in question adjoined the king's house, and whilst the merchant was rejoicing in this and saying, "Verily, my luck hath returned, and I shall live in the shadow of this king the rest of my life," he espied an opening walled up with clay and stones. So he cleared the opening the better to see what was behind it, and behold, it was a window giving upon the lodging of the king's women. When he saw this, he was startled and affrighted and rising in haste, fetched clay and stopped it up again. But one of the eunuchs[1]

1 "Eunuch," etymologically means chamberlain (εὐνὴ + ἔχων), a bed-chamber-servant or slave. Some writers hold that the creation of the semivir or apocopus began as a punishment in Egypt and elsewhere; and under the Romans amputation was frequent: others trace the Greek "invalid," *i.e.*, impotent man, to marital jealousy, and not a few to the wife who wished to use the sexless for hard work in the house without danger to the slave-girls. The origin of the mutilation is referred by Ammianus Marcellinus (lib. iv., chap.

saw him, and suspecting him, repaired to the Sultan, and told him of this. So he came and seeing the stones pulled out, was wroth with the merchant and said to him, "Be this my reward from thee, that thou seekest to unveil my Harim?" Thereupon he bade pluck out his eyes; and they did as he commanded.

17), and the Classics generally, to Semiramis, an "ancient queen" of decidedly doubtful epoch, who thus prevented the propagation of weaklings. But in Genesis (xxxvii. 36; xxxix. 1, margin) we find Potiphar termed a "Sarim" (castrato). Herodotus (iii. chap. 48) tells us that Periander, tyrant of Corinth, sent three hundred Corcyrean boys to Alyattes for castration ἐπὶ ᾗ τ ἐκτομῇ, and that Panionios of Chios sold caponised lads for high prices, (viii. 105)· he notices (viii. 104 and other places) that eunuchs "of the Sun, of Heaven, of the hand of God," were looked upon as honourable men amongst the Persians whom Stephanus and Brissonius charge with having invented the name (Dabistan i. 171). Ctesias also declares that the Persian kings were under the influence of eunuchs. In the debauched ages of Rome the women found a new use for these effeminates, who had lost only the testes or testiculi=the witnesses (of generative force): it is noticed by Juvenal (i. 22; ii. 365-379; vi. 366) :—

—sunt quos imbelles et mollia semper
Oscula delectant.

So Martial,

—vult futui Gallia, non parere.

And Mirabeau knew (see Kadísah) "qu'ils mordent les femmes et les liment avec une précieuse continuité." (Compare my vol. i. night xxvix.; vol. iv. night cccIxxv. The men also used them as catamites (Horace i. Od. xxxvii.).

"Contaminato cum grege turpium
Morbo virorum,"

In religion the intestabilis or intestatus was held ill-omened, and not permitted to become a priest (Seneca, Controv. ii. 4), a practice perpetuated in the various Christian Churches. The manufacture was forbidden, to the satisfaction of Martial, by Domitian, whose edict Nero confirmed; and was restored by the Byzantine empire, which advanced eunuchs, like Eutropius and Narses, to the highest dignities of the realm. The cruel custom to the eternal disgrace of mediæval Christianity was revived in Rome for providing the choirs in the Sistine Chapel and elsewhere with boys' voices. Isaiah mentions the custom (lvi. 3-6). Mohammed, who notices in the Koran (xxiv 31), "such men as attend women and have no need of women," *i.e.*, "have no natural force," expressly forbade (iv. 118) "changing Allah's creatures," referring, say

Siyú

tractate Fi'l-Tahrimi Khidmati 'l-Khisyán = on the illegality of using eunuchs. Yet the Harem perpetuated the practice throughout Al-Islam and African jealousy made a gross abuse of it. To quote no other instance, the Sultan of Dár-For had a thousand eunuchs under a Malik or king, and all the chief offices of the empire, such as Ab (father) and Báb (door), were monopolised by these neutrals. The centre of supply was the Upper Nile, where the operation was found dangerous after the age of fifteen, and when badly performed only one in four survived. For this reason, during the last century the Coptic monks of Girgah and Zawy al-Dayr, near Assiout, engaged in this scandalous traffic, and declared that it was philanthropic to operate scientifically (Prof. Panuri and many others). Eunuchs are now made in the Sudán, Nubia, Abyssinia, Kordofán, and Dár-For, especially the Messalmiyah district: one of those towns was called "Tawáshah" (eunuchry) from the traffic there conducted by Fukahá or religious teachers. Many are supplied by the district between Majarah (Majarash?) and the port of Masawwah; there are also depots at Mbadr, near Tajurrah-harbour, where Yusuf Bey,

The merchant took his eyes in his hand and said, "How long, O star of ill-omen, wilt thou afflict me? First my wealth and now my life!" And he bewailed himself, saying, "Striving profiteth me naught against evil fortune. The Compassionate aided me not, and effort was worse than useless.[1]" "On like wise, O king," continued the youth, "whilst fortune was favour-

Governor in 1880, caponised some forty boys, including the brother of a hostile African chief: here also the well-known Abu Bakr was scandalously active. It is calculated that not fewer than eight thousand of these unfortunates are annually exported to Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey. Article IV. of the Anglo-Egyptian Convention punishes the offence with death, and no one would object to hanging the murderer under whose mutilating razor a boy dies. Yet this, like most of our modern "improvements" in Egypt, is a mere *brutum fulmen*. The crime is committed under our very eyes, but we will not see it.

The Romans numbered three kinds of eunuchs:—1. Castrati, clean-shaved, from Gr. κέστρος. 2. Spadones, from σπάω, when the testicles are torn out, not from "Spada," a town of Persia; and, 3. Thlibii, from θλίβω, to press, squeeze, when the testicles are bruised, etc. In the East also, as I have stated (vol. iii. night cccIxxv), eunuchs are of three kinds:—1 Sandali, or the clean shaved, the classical apocopus. The parts are swept off by a single cut of a razor, a tube (tin or wooden) is set in the urethra, the wound is cauterised with boiling oil, and the patient is planted in a fresh dunghill. His diet is milk; and if under puberty, he often survives. This is the eunuque aqueduc, who must pass his water through a tube. 2. The eunuch whose penis is removed: he retains all the power of copulation and procreation without the wherewithal. 3 The eunuch, or classical Thlibias and Semivir, who has been rendered sexless by removing the testicles (as the priests of Cybele were castrated with a stone knife), or by bruising (the Greek Thlásias), twisting, searing, or bandaging them. A more humane process has lately been introduced: a horsehair is tied round the neck of the scrotum and tightened by slow degrees till the circulation of the part stops and the bag drops off without pain. This has been adopted in sundry Indian regiments of Irregular Cavalry, and it succeeded admirably: the animals rarely required a day's rest. The practice was known to the ancients See notes on Kadísah in Mirabeau. The *Eunuchata virgo* was invented by the Lydians, according to their historian Xanthus. Zachias (Quæst. medico-legal) declares that the process was one of infibulation or simple sewing up the vulva; but modern experience has suggested an operation like the "spaying" of bitches, or mutilation of the womb. Dr. Robert ("Journey from Delhi to Bombay, Müller's Archiv. 1843") speaks of a eunuch'd woman who after ovariotomy had no breasts, no pubes, no rotundities, and no desires. The Australians practise exsection of the ovaries systematically to make women barren. Miklucho Maclay learned from the traveller Retsch that about Lake Parapitshurie men's urethras were split, and the girls were spayed: the latter showing two scars in the groin. They have flat bosoms, but feminine forms, and are slightly bearded. MacGillivray, of the "Rattlesnake," saw near Cape York a woman with these scars: she was a surdo-mute, and had probably been spayed to prevent increase. The old Scandinavians, from Norway to Iceland, systematically gelded "sturdy vagrants," in order that they might not beget bastards. The Hottentots before marriage used to cut off the left testicle, meaning by such semi-castration to prevent the begetting of twins. This curious custom, mentioned by the Jesuit Tochard, Boeving, and Kolbe, is now apparently obsolete—at least, the traveller Fritsch did not find it.

1 Arab. "Harám"="forbidden," sinful.

able to me, all that I did came to good; but now that it hath turned against me, everything turneth to mine ill." When the youth had made an end of his tale, the king's anger subsided a little, and he said, "Return him to the prison, for the day draweth to an end, and to-morrow we will look into his affair, and punish him for his ill-deeds."

The Second Day.

OF LOOKING TO THE ENDS OF AFFAIRS.

WHEN it was the next day, the second of the king's Wazirs, whose name was Bahaún, came in to him and said, "Allah advance the king! This deed which yonder youth hath done is a grave matter, and a foul misdeed and a heinous against the household of the king." So Azadbakht bade fetch the youth, because of the Minister's speech; and when he came into the presence, said to him, "Woe to thee, O youth! There is no help but that I do thee die by the dreadest of deaths, for indeed thou hast committed a grave crime, and I will make thee a warning to the folk." The youth replied, "O king, hasten not, for the looking to the ends of affairs is a column of the kingdom, and a cause of continuance and assurance for the kingship. Whoso looketh not to the issues of actions, there befalleth him that which befell the merchant, and whoso looketh to the consequences of actions, there betideth him of joyance that which betideth the merchant's son." The king asked, "And what is the story of the merchant and his sons?" and the youth answered, "Hear, O king,

THE TALE OF THE MERCHANT AND HIS SONS.[1]

There was once a merchant, who had abundant wealth, and a wife to boot. He set out one day on a business journey, leaving his wife big with child, and said to her, "Albeit, I now

1 In Chavis and Cazotte, who out-galland'd Galland in transmogrifying the Arabic, this is the "Story of Illage (Al-Hájj) Mahomet and his sons; or, the Imprudent Man." The tale occurs in many forms and with great modifications: see, for instance, the Gesta Romanorum "Of the miraculous recall of sinners and of the consolation which piety offers to the distressed," the adventures of the knight Placidus, vol ii. 99 Charles Swan, London. Rivington, 1824.

leave thee, yet I will return before the birth of the babe, Inshallah!" Then he farewelled her and setting out, ceased not faring from country to country till he came to the court of one of the kings and foregathered with him. Now this king needed one who should order his affairs and those of his kingdom, and seeing the merchant well-bred and intelligent, he required him to abide at court and entreated him honourably. After some years, he sought his Sovran's leave to go to his own house, but the king would not consent to this; whereupon he said to him, "O king, suffer me go and see my children and come again." So he granted him permission for this, and, taking surety of him for his return, gave him a purse, wherein were a thousand gold dinars. Accordingly, the merchant embarked in a ship and set sail, intending for his mother-land. On such wise fared it with the trader; but as regards his wife, news had reached her that her husband had accepted service with King Such-an-one; so she arose and taking her two sons, (for she had born twins in his absence,) set out seeking those parts. As Fate would have it, they happened upon an island and her husband came thither that very night in the ship. So the woman said to her children, "The ship cometh from the country where your father is: hie ye to the sea-shore, that ye may enquire of him." Accordingly, they repaired to the sea-shore and going up into the ship, fell to playing about it and busied themselves with their play till evening evened. Now the merchant their sire lay asleep in the ship, and the noisy disport of the boys troubled him; whereupon he rose to call out to them "Silence" and let the purse with the thousand dinars fall among the bales of merchandise. He sought for it and finding it not, buffeted his head and seized upon the boys, saying, "None took the purse but you: ye were playing all about the bales, so ye might steal somewhat, and there was none here but you twain." Then he took his staff, and laying hold of the children, fell to beating them and flogging them, whilst they wept, and the crew came round about them saying, "The boys of this island are all rogues and robbers." Then, of the greatness of the merchant's anger, he swore an oath that, except they brought out the purse, he would drown them in the sea; so when by reason of their denial his oath demanded the deed, he took the two boys and binding them each to a bundle of reeds, cast them into the water. Presently, finding that they tarried from her, the mother of the two boys went searching for them, till she came to the ship and fell to saying, "Who hath seen two boys of mine? Their fashion is so and so and their age

thus and thus." When the crew heard her words, they said, "This is the description of the two boys who were drowned in the sea but now." Their mother hearing this, began calling on them and crying, "Alas, my anguish for your loss, O my sons! Where was the eye of your father this day, that it might have seen you?" Then one of the sailors asked her, "Whose wife art thou?" And she answered, "I am the wife of Such-an-one the trader. I was on my way to him, and there hath befallen me this calamity." When the merchant heard her words, he knew her and rising to his feet, rent his raiment and beat his head and said to his wife, "By Allah, I have destroyed my children with mine own hand! This is the end of whoso looketh not to the endings of affairs. This is his reward who taketh not time to reflect." Then he took to wailing and weeping over them, he and his wife, and he said to his shipmates, "By Allah, I shall never enjoy my life, till I light upon news of them!" And he began to go round about the sea, in quest of his sons, but found them not. Meanwhile, the wind carried the two children from the ship towards the land, and cast them up on the sea-shore. As for one of them, a company of the guards of the king of those parts found him and carried him to their lord, who marvelled at him with exceeding marvel and adopted him, giving out to the folk that he was his own son, whom he had hidden,[1] of his love for him. So the folk rejoiced in him with joy exceeding, for their lord's sake, and the king appointed him his heir-apparent and the inheritor of his kingdom. On this wise a number of years passed, till the king died and they enthroned the youth sovran in his stead, when he sat down on the seat of his kingship and his estate flourished and his affairs prospered with all regularity. Meanwhile, his father and mother had gone round about, in quest of him and his brother, all the islands of the sea, hoping that the tide might have cast them up, but found no trace of them; so they despaired of them and took up their abode in a certain of the islands. One day, the merchant, being in the market, saw a broker, and in his hand a boy he was crying for sale, and said in himself, "I will buy yonder boy, so

1 *i.e.*, For fear of the "eye": see vol i. night xiii. and passim. In these days the practice is rare; but, whenever you see at Cairo an Egyptian dame daintily dressed and leading by the hand a grimy little boy whose eyes are black with flies and whose dress is torn and unclean, you see what has taken its place And if you would praise the brat you must not say "Oh, what a pretty boy!" but "Inshallah!" = the Lord doth as He pleaseth.

I may solace myself with him for my sons.[1]" So he bought him and bore him to his house; and, when his wife saw him, she cried out and said, "By Allah, this is my son!" Accordingly his father and mother rejoiced in him with exceeding joy and asked him of his brother; but he answered, "The waves parted us and I knew not how it went with him." Therewith his father and mother consoled themselves with him and on this wise a number of years passed by. Now the merchant and his wife had homed them in a city of the land where the other son was king, and when the boy they had recovered grew up, his father assigned unto him merchandise, to the end that he might travel therewith. Upon this he fared forth and entered the city wherein his brother ruled and anon news reached the king that a merchant had come thither with merchandise befitting royalties; so he sent for him and the young trader obeyed the summons and going in to him, sat down before him. Neither of them knew the other; but blood moved between them[2] and the king said to the merchant youth, "I desire of thee that thou tarry with me and I will exalt thy station and give thee all that thou requirest and cravest." Accordingly, he abode with him awhile, never quitting him; and when he saw that he would not suffer him to depart from him, he sent to his father and mother and bade them remove thither to him. Hereat they resolved upon moving to that island, and their son still increased in honour with the king albeit he knew not that he was his brother. Now it chanced one night that the king sallied forth without the city and drank and the wine got the mastery of him and he became drunken. So, of the youth's fear for his safety, he said, "I will keep watch myself over the king this night, seeing that he deserveth this from me, for that which he hath done with me of kindly deeds"; and he arose forthright and baring his brand, stationed himself at the door of the king's pavilion. But one of the royal pages saw him standing there, with the drawn sword in his hand, and he was of those who envied him his favour with the king; therefore, he said to him, "Why dost thou on this wise at this time and in the like of this place?" Said the youth, "I am keeping watch and ward over the king myself, in requital of his bounties to me." The page said no more to him; however, when it was

1 The adoption of slave lads and lasses was and is still common among Moslems.

2 I have elsewhere noted this "pathetic fallacy" which is a *lieu commun* of Eastern folk-lore and not less frequently used in the mediæval literature of Europe before statistics were invented.

morning, he acquainted a number of the king's servants with the matter, and they said, "This is an opportunity for us. Come, let us assemble together and acquaint the king therewith, so the young merchant may lose regard with him[1] and he rid us of him and we be at rest from him." So they assembled together and going in to the king, said to him, "We have a warning wherewith we would warn thee." Quoth he, "And what is your warning?" and quoth they, "This youth, the trader, whom thou hast taken into favour and whose rank thou hast exalted above the chiefest of thy lords, we saw yesterday bare his brand and design to fall upon thee, to the end that he might slay thee." Now when the king heard this, his colour changed and he said to them, "Have ye proof of this?" They rejoined, "What proof wouldst thou have? And thou desirest this, feign thyself drunken again this night and lie down as if asleep, and privily watch him and thou wilt see with thine eyes all that we have mentioned to thee." Then they went to the youth and said to him, "Know that the king thanketh thee for thy dealing yesternight and exceedeth in commendation of thy good deed"; and they prompted him again to do the like. Accordingly, when the next night came, the king abode on wake, watching the youth; and as for the latter, he went to the door o the pavilion and unsheathing his scymitar, stood in the doorway. When the king saw him do thus, he was sore disquieted and bade seize him and said to him, "Is this my reward from thee? I showed thee favour more than any else and thou wouldst do with me this abominable deed." Then arose two of the king's pages and said to him, "O our lord, an thou order it, we will smite his neck." But the king said, "Haste in killing is a vile thing, for 'tis[2] a grave matter; the quick we can kill, but the killed we cannot quicken, and needs must we look to the end of affairs. The slaying of this youth will not escape us.[3]" Therewith he bade imprison him, whilst he himself went back to the city and, his duties done, fared forth to the chase. Then he returned to town and forgot the youth; so the pages went in to him and said to him, "O king, an thou keep silence concerning yonder youth, who designed to slaughter thee, all thy servants will presume upon the king's majesty, and indeed the folk talk of this matter." Hereat the king waxed wroth and cried, "Fetch him hither"; and bade the headsman strike off his

1 Arab "Yaskut min 'Aynayh," lit.=fall from his two eyes, lose favour
2 *i.e.*, killing a man.
3 *i.e.*, we can slay him whenever we will

head. So they brought the youth and bound his eyes; and the sworder stood at his head and said to the king, "By thy leave, O my lord, I will smite his neck." But the king cried, "Stay, till I look into his affair. Needs must I put him to death and the despatching of him will not escape me." Then he restored him to the prison and there he abode till it should be the king's will to do him die. Presently, his parents heard of the matter; whereupon his father arose and going up to the palace, wrote a letter and presented it to the king, who read it, and behold, therein was written, saying, "Have ruth on me, so may Allah have ruth on thee, and hasten not in the slaughter of my son; for indeed I acted hastily in a certain affair and drowned his brother in the sea, and to this day I bemourn him. An thou must needs kill him, kill me in his stead." Therewith the old merchant, weeping bitterly, prostrated himself before that king, who said to him, "Tell me thy tale." Said the merchant, "O my lord, this youth had a brother and I in my haste cast the twain into the sea." And he related to him his story, first and last, whereupon the king cried with a mighty loud cry and casting himself down from the throne, embraced his father and brother and said to the merchant, "By Allah, thou art my very father and this is my brother and thy wife is our mother." And they abode weeping, all three of them. Then the king acquainted his people with the matter and said to them, "O folk, how deem ye of my looking to the consequences of action?" and they all marvelled at his wisdom and foresight. Then he turned to his sire and said to him, "Hadst thou looked to the issue of thine affair and made due delay in whatso thou didst, there had not betided thee this repentance and chagrin all this time." Thereupon he sent for his mother and they rejoiced one in other and lived all their days in joy and gladness. "What then" (continued the young treasurer), "is more grievous that the lack of looking to the ends of things? Wherefore hasten thou not in the slaying of me, lest penitence betide thee and sore chagrin." When the king heard this, he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair; for that deliberation in such is advisable and the slaughter of this youth shall not escape us."

The Third Day.

OF THE ADVANTAGES OF PATIENCE.[1]

WHEN it was the third day, the third Wazir came in to the king and said to him, "O king, delay not the matter of this youth, because his deed hath caused us fall into the mouths of folk, and it behoveth that thou slay him forthright, that the talk may be cut from us and it be not said :—The king saw on his bed a man with his wife and spared him." The king was chagrined by these words and bade bring the youth. Accordingly, they fetched him in fetters, and indeed the king's anger was upstirred against him by the Minister's speech and he was troubled; so he said to him, "O base of birth, thou hast dishonoured us and marred our mention, and needs must I do away thy life from the world." Quoth the youth, "O king, make use of patience in all thine affairs, so wilt thou win to thy wish, for that Allah Almighty hath appointed the issue of long-suffering to be in abounding good, and indeed by patience Abú Sábir ascended from the pit and sat down upon the throne." Asked the king, "Who was Abu Sabir, and what is his tale?" and the youth answered, saying, "Hear thou, O king,

THE STORY OF ABU SABIR."

There was once a man, a village headman,[2] Abu Sabir hight, and he had much black cattle and a buxom wife, who had borne him two sons. They abode in a certain hamlet and there used to come thither a lion and rend and devour Abu Sabir's herd, so that the most part thereof was wasted and his wife said to him one day, "This lion hath wasted the greater part of our property. Arise, mount thy horse, and take thy host and do thy best to kill him, so we may be at rest from him." But Abu Sabir said,

1 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Abosaber the Patient." "Abu Sabir" would mean "Father of the Patient (one)."

2 Arab. "Dihkán," in Persian a villager; but here something more, a village-elder or chief. Al-Mas'udi (chap. xxiv), and other historians apply the term to a class of noble Persians descended from the ten sons of Wahkert the first "Dihkán," the fourth generation from King Kayomars.

"Have patience, O woman, for the issue of patience is praised. This lion it is which transgresseth against us, and the transgressor, perforce, must Almighty Allah destroy him. Indeed, 'tis our long-suffering that shall slay him,[1] and he that doeth evil needs must it recoil upon him." A few days after, the king went forth one morning to hunt and falling in with the lion, he and his host, gave chase to him and ceased not pursuit till they slew him. This news reached Abu Sabir who improved the occasion to his wife, "Said I not unto thee, O woman, that whoso doth evil, it shall recoil upon him? Haply an I sought to slay the lion myself, I had not prevailed against him, and this is the issue of patience." It befell, after this, that a man was slain in Abu Sabir's village; wherefore the Sultan bade plunder the village, and they spoiled the patient one's goods with the rest. Thereupon his wife said to him, "All the king's officers know thee; so do thou prefer thy plaint to the sovran, that he may bid thy beasts to be restored to thee." But he said to her, "O woman, said I not to thee that he who worketh wrong shall be wronged? Indeed, the king hath done evil, and right soon he shall suffer the issues of his deed, for whoso taketh the goods of the folk, needs must his goods be taken." A man of his neighbours heard his speech, and he was an envier of his; so he went to the Sultan and acquainted him therewith, whereupon the king sent and plundered all the rest of his goods and drave him forth from the village, and his wife and family with him. They went wandering in the waste grounds about the hamlet and his wife said to him, "All that hath befallen us cometh of thy slowness in affairs and thy helplessness." But he said to her, "Have patience, for the issue of patience is good." Then they walked on a little way, and thieves met them and despoiling them of whatso remained with them, stripped them of their raiment and took from them the two children; whereupon the woman wept and said to her husband, "Hearkye, my good man, put away from thee this folly and up with us to follow the thieves, so, peradventure they may have compassion on us and restore the children to us." He replied, "O woman, have patience, for he who doth evil shall be requited with evil and his frowardness shall revert upon him. Were I to follow them, belike one of them would take his sword and smite my neck and slay me; but have patience, for the issue of patience is praised." Then they

1 Reminding one not a little of certain anecdotes anent Quakers, current in England and English-speaking lands.

fared on till they made a village[1] in the land of Kirman, and by it a river of water; so the man said to his wife, "Tarry thou here, whilst I enter the village and look us out a place wherein we may home ourselves." And he left her by the water and entered the village. Presently, up came a horseman in quest of water, wherewith to water his horse: he saw the woman and she was pleasing in his eyes; so quoth he to her, "Arise, mount with me and I will take thee to wife and entreat thee kindly." Quoth she, "Spare me, so may Allah spare thee! Indeed I have a husband." But he drew his dudgeon and said to her, "An thou obey me not, I will smite thee and slay thee." When she saw his frowardness, she wrote on the ground in the sand with her finger, saying, "O Abu Sabir, thou hast not ceased to be patient, till thy good is gone from thee and thy children and now thy wife, who was more precious in thy sight than everything and than all thy monies, and indeed thou abidest in thy sorrow the whole of thy life long, so thou mayest see what thy patience will profit thee." Then the horseman took her, and setting her behind him, went his way. As for Abu Sabir, when he returned, he saw not his wife but he read what was writ upon the ground, wherefore he wept and sat awhile sorrowing. Then said he to himself, "O Abu Sabir, it behoveth thee to be patient, for haply there shall betide thee an affair yet sorer than this and more grievous"; and he went forth a-following his face,[2] like to one love-distraught and passion-madded, till he came to a gang of labourers working upon the palace of the king, by way of forced labour.[3] When the overseers saw him, they laid hold of him and said to him, "Work thou with these folk at the palace of the king; else we will imprison thee for life." So he fell to working with them as a labourer and every day they gave him a bannock of bread. He wrought with them a month's space, till it chanced that one of the labourers mounted a ladder and falling, brake his leg; whereupon he cried out and shed tears. Quoth Abu Sabir to him, "Have patience and weep not; for in thine endurance thou shalt find ease." But the man said

1 Arab. "Karyah," a word with a long history. The root seems to be Karaha, he met; in Chald. Karih and Kárta (emphatic Kárta) = a town or city; and in Heb. Kiriath, Kiryáthayim, etc. We find it in Carthage = Kartá hádisah, or New Town as opposed to Utica (Atikah) Old Town; in Carchemish and in a host of similar compounds. In Syria and Egypt, Kariyah, like Kafr, now means a hamlet, a village.

2 *i.e.*, wandering at a venture.

3 Arab. "Sakhrah," the old French Corvée, and the "Begár" of India.

to him, "How long shall I have patience?" And he answered, saying, "Long-suffering bringeth a man forth of the bottom of the pit and seateth him on the throne of the kingdom." It so fortuned that the king was seated at the lattice, hearkening to their talk, and Abu Sabir's words angered him for the moment; wherefore he bade bring him before him and they brought him forthright. Now there was in the king's palace an underground dungeon and therein a vast silo[1] and a deep, into which the king caused cast Abu Sabir, saying to him, "O little of wit, soon shall we see how thou wilt come forth of the pit to the throne of the kingdom." Then he used continuously to come and stand at the mouth of the pit and say, "O little of wit, O Abu Sabir,[2] I see thee not come forth of the pit and sit down on the king's throne!" And he assigned him each day two bannocks of bread, whilst Abu Sabir kept silence and spake not, but patiently bore whatso betided him. Now the king had a brother, whom he had imprisoned in that pit of old time, and he had died there; but the folk of the realm deemed him still alive, and when his durance grew long, the courtiers of the king used to talk of this and of the tyranny of their liege Lord, and the bruit spread abroad that the sovran was a tyrant, so they fell upon him one day and slew him. Then they sought the silo and brought out therefrom Abu Sabir, deeming him the king's brother, for that he was the nearest of folk to him in favour and the likest, and he had been long in the pit. So they doubted not but that he was the Prince and said to him, "Reign thou in thy brother's room, for we have slain him and thou art sovran in his stead." But Abu Sabir was silent and spoke not a word[3]; and he knew that this was the result of his patience. Then he arose and sitting down on the king's throne, donned the royal dress and dispensed justice and equity, and affairs prospered; wherefore the lieges obeyed him and the subjects inclined to him and many were his soldiers. Now the king, who erst had plundered Abu Sabir's goods and

1 Arab. "Matmúrah": see vol. i. night xxxviii., where it is used as an "underground cell." The word is extensively used in the Maghrib or Western Africa

2 Arab. "Yá Abá Sábir." There are five vocative particles in Arabic; "Yá," common to the near and far; "Ayá" (ho!) and "Hayá" (holla!) addressed to the far, and "Ay" and "A" (A-'Abda-lláhi, O Abdullah), to those near All govern the accusative of a noun in construction in the literary language only; and the vulgar use none but the first named The English speaking races neglect the vocative particle, and I never heard it except in the Southern States of the Anglo-American Union = Oh, Mr Smith.

3 He was not honest enough to undeceive them.

driven him forth of his village, had an enemy; and the foe mounted horse against him and overcame him and captured his capital; wherefore he betook him to flight and came to Abu Sabir's city, craving support of him and seeking that he should succour him. He knew not that the king of the city was the headman whom he had spoiled; so he presented himself before him and made complaint to him; but Abu Sabir knew him and said to him, "This is somewhat of the issue of patience. Allah the Most High hath given me power over thee." Then he commanded his guards to plunder the unjust king and his suite; so they spoiled them and stripping them of their clothes, put them forth of his country. When Abu Sabir's troops saw this, they marvelled and said, "What be this deed the king doth? There cometh a king to him, craving protection, and he spoileth him! This is not the fashion of kings." But they dared not speak of this. Presently, news came to the king of highwaymen in his land; so he set out in quest of them and ceased not to follow after them, till he seized on them all, and behold, they were the very thieves who had plundered him and his wife by the way and had carried off his children. Accordingly he bade bring them before him, and when they came into his presence, he questioned them, saying, "Where are the two boys ye took on such a day?" Said they, "They are with us and we will present them to our lord the king for Mamelukes to serve him and give him wealth galore that we have gotten together and doff all we own and repent from lawlessness and fight in thy service." Abu Sabir, however, paid no heed to their words, and seized all their good and bade put them all to death. Furthermore, he took his two boys and rejoiced in them with exceeding joy, whereat the troops murmured among themselves, saying, "Verily, this is a greater tyrant than his brother! There cometh to him a gang of thieves, and they seek to repent and proffer two boys by way of peace-offering, and he taketh the two lads and all their good and slayeth them! Indeed this be violent oppression." After this came the horseman, who had seized Abu Sabir's wife, and complained of her to the king that she would not give him possession of her person, and solemnly declared that she was his wife. The king bade bring her before him, that he might hear her plea and pronounce judgment upon her. So the horseman came with her before him, and when the king saw her, he knew her and taking her from her ravisher, bade put him to death. Then he became aware of the troops, that they murmured against him and spake of him as a tyrant; so he turned to his courtiers and ministers

and said to them, "As for me, by Allah of All-might,[1] I am not the king's brother! Nay, I am but one whom the king imprisoned upon a word he heard from me and he used every day to come and taunt me therewith. Ye deem me the king's brother; but I am Abu Sabir and the Lord hath given me the kingship in virtue of my patience. As for the king who sought protection of me and I plundered him, 'twas he who first wronged me, for that he plundered me aforetime and drave me forth of my native land and banished me, without due cause; wherefore I requited him with that which he had done to me, in the way of lawful retribution. As for the highwaymen who proffered repentance, there was no repentance for them with me, because they began upon me with foul dealing and waylaid me by the road and despoiled me and seized my good and my sons, the two boys that I took of them, and those ye deemed Mamelukes are my very sons; so I avenged myself on the thieves of that which they did with me whilome and requited them with strict justice. As for the horseman whom I slew, this woman I took from him was my wife and he seized her by force, but Allah the Most High hath restored her to me; so this was my right, and my deed that I have done was righteous, albeit ye, judging by the externals of the matter, deemed that I had done this by way of tyranny." When the folk heard these words, they marvelled and fell prostrate before him; and they redoubled in esteem for him and exceeding affection and sued pardon of him, admiring that which Allah had done with him and how He had given him the kingship by reason of his long-suffering and his patience and how he had raised himself by his endurance from the bottom of the pit to the throne of the kingdom, what while Allah cast down the late king from the throne into the pit.[2] Then Abu Sabir foregathered with his wife and said to her, "How deemest thou of the fruit of patience and its sweetness and the fruit of haste and its bitterness? Verily, all that a man doth of good and evil, he shall assuredly encounter the same." "On like wise, O king," (continued the young treasurer,) "it besitteth thee to practise patience, when-

1 Here the oath is justified; but the reader will have remarked that the name of Allah is often taken in vain Moslems, however, so far from holding this a profanation deem it an acknowledgment of the Omnipotence and Omnipresence The Jews from whom the Christians have borrowed had an interest in concealing the name of their tribal divinity; and therefore made it ineffable.

2 *i.e.*, the grave, the fosse commune of slain men.

ever it is possible to thee, for that longsuffering is the wont of the noble, and it is the chiefest of their reliance, especially for kings." When the king heard this from the youth, his wrath subsided; so he bade return him to the prison, and the folk dispersed that day.

The Fourth Day.

OF THE ILL EFFECTS OF IMPATIENCE.

WHEN it was the fourth day, the fourth Wazir, whose name was Zúshád,[1] made his appearance and prostrating himself to his liege lord, said to him, "O king, let not the talk of yonder youth delude thee, for that he is not a truth-teller. As long as he shall remain alive, the folk will not leave talking nor will thy heart cease to be occupied with him." Cried the king, "By Allah, thou sayest sooth and I will cause fetch him this day and slay him between my hands." Then bade he bring the youth; so they fetched him in fetters and he said to him, "Woe to thee! Thinkest thou to appease my heart with thy prate, whereby the days are spent in talk? I mean to do thee die this day and be quit of thee." Said the youth, "O king, 'tis in thy power to put me out of the world whenso thou wilt, but haste is the wont of the ignoble and patience the sign of the noble. An thou do me to death, thou wilt repent, and when thou desire to bring me back to life, thou wilt not be able. Indeed, whoso acteth hastily in an affair, there befalleth him what befell Bihzád, son of the king." Quoth the king, "And what is his tale?" Replied the treasurer, "O king, hear

THE STORY OF PRINCE BIHZAD.[2]"

There was once, of olden time, a king and he had a son Bihzad hight, there was not in his tide a fairer than he and he loved to fellow with the folk and to mix with the merchants and sit and talk with them. One day, as he was seated in an

1 A fancy name; "Zawash" in Pers. is = Ζεὺς, the planet Jupiter, either borrowed from Greece, or both descended from some long forgotten ancestor

2 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Bhazad (!) the Impatient." The name is Persian, Bih (well, good) Zád (born). In the adj bih we recognise a positive lost in English and German which retain the comparative (bih-tar = better) and superlative (bih-tarin = best).

assembly, amongst a number of people, he heard them talking of his own beauty and loveliness, and saying, "There be not in his time a fairer than he." But one of the company said, "Indeed, the daughter of King Such-an-one is seemlier than he." When Bihzad heard this saying, his reason fled and his heart fluttered and he called the last speaker and said to him, "Repeat to me that which thou saidst and tell me the truth concerning her whom thou avouchest to be goodlier than I and whose daughter she is." Quoth the man, "She is the daughter of King Such-an-one"; whereupon Bihzad's heart clave to her and his colour changed. Presently the news reached his sire, who said to him, "O my son, this maiden to whom thy heart cleaveth is at thy command and we have power over her; so wait till I demand her in wedlock for thee." But the Prince said, "I will not wait." So the king hastened in the matter and sent to demand her of her sire, who required of him an hundred thousand dinars paid down to his daughter's dowry. Quoth Bihzad's father, "So be it," and weighed out what was in his treasuries, and there remained to his charge but a little of the dower.[1] So he said, "Have patience, O my son, till we gather together the rest of the money and send to fetch her for thee, since now she has become thine." Therewith the Prince waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, "I will not have patience"; so he took his sword and his lance[2] and mounting his horse, went forth and fell to cutting the way.[3] It chanced one day that he fell upon a company of folk who overcame him by dint of numbers and taking him prisoner, pinioned him and carried him to the lord of that land wherein he was a-highwaying. This king saw his semblance and loveliness and misdoubting of him, said, "This be no robber's favour. Tell me truly, O youth, who thou art." Bihzad was ashamed to acquaint him with his condition and preferred death for himself; so he answered, "I am naught but a thief and a bandit." Quoth the king, "It behoveth us not to act hastily in the matter of this youth, but that we look into his affair, for that impatience gendereth penitence." So he imprisoned him in his palace and assigned him one to serve him. Meanwhile the news spread abroad that Bihzad, son of the sovran, was lost, whereupon his father sent letters in quest of him to all the kings

1 *i.e.*, the moiety kept by the bridegroom, a contingent settlement paid at divorce or on the death of the husband

2 Arab "Rumh" = the horseman's lance not the footman's spear.

3 *i.e.*, became a highwayman (a time-honoured and honourable career) in order to collect money for completing the dowry.

including him with whom he was imprisoned. When the letter reached the latter, he praised Almighty Allah for that he had not anyways hastened in Bihzad's affair, and bidding them bring him before himself, said to him, "Art thou minded to destroy thy life?" Quoth Bihzad, "I did this for fear of shame"; and the king said, "An thou fear shame, thou shouldst not practise haste in thy doings; knowest thou not that the fruit of impatience is repentance? Had we hasted, we also, like thee, had repented." Then he conferred on him a robe of honour and engaged to him for the completion of the dowry and sent to his father, giving him the glad tidings and comforting his heart with news of his son's safety; after which he said to Bihzad, "Arise, O my son, and go to thy sire." Rejoined the Prince, "O king, complete thy kindness to me by hastening my going-in to my wife; for, an I go back to my sire, the time will be long till he send a messenger and he return, promising me despatch. The king laughed and marvelled at him and said to him, "I fear for thee from this precipitancy, lest thou come to shame and win not thy wish." Then he gave him muchel of wealth and wrote him letters, commending him to the father of the Princess, and despatched him to them. When he drew near their country, the king came forth to meet him with the people of his realm and assigned him a fine lodging and bade hasten the going-in of his daughter to him, in compliance with the other king's letter. He also advised the Prince's father of his son's coming and they busied themselves with the affair of the young lady. When it was the day of the bride's going-in,[1] Bihzad, of his impetuosity and lack of patience, betook himself to the wall, which was between himself and her lodging and wherein was a hole pierced, and of his haste looked through it, so he might see his bride. But her mother espied him[2] and this was grievous to her; so she took from one of the pages two red-hot iron spits and thrust them into the hole through which the Prince was looking. The spits ran into his eyes and put them out and he fell down fainting and the wedding-festival was changed to mourning and sore concern. "See, then, O King (continued the youth), "the issue of the Prince's haste and lack of deliberation, for indeed his impatience bequeathed him long penitence and his joy turned to annoy; and on like wise was it with the woman who hastened to put out his eyes and

1 *i.e.*, to the bride, the wedding-day; not to be confounded with "going in unto," etc.

2 Probably meaning that she saw the eyes espying through the crevice without knowing whose they were.

delayed not to deliberate. All this was the doing of haste; wherefore it behoveth the king not to be hasty in putting me to death, for that I am under the hold of his hand, and whatso time thou desirest my slaughter, it shall not escape thee." When the king heard this his anger subsided and he said, "Return him back to the prison till to-morrow, so we may look into his case."

The Fifth Day.

OF THE ISSUES OF GOOD AND EVIL ACTIONS.

When it was the fifth day, the fifth Wazir, whose name was Jahrbaur,[1] came in to the king and prostrating himself before him, said, "O king, it behoveth thee, an thou see or hear one look on thy house,[2] that thou pluck out his eyes. How then should it be with him whom thou sawest a middlemost thy palace and on thy royal bed, and he suspected with thy Harim, and not of thy lineage or of thy kindred? So do thou away this shame by putting him to death. Indeed, we urge thee not to this, except for the assurance of thine empire and of our zeal for thy loyal counselling and of our affection to thee. How can it be lawful that this youth should live for a single hour?" Therewith the king was filled with fury and cried, "Bring him forthright." So they fetched the youth whom they set before him in fetters, and the king said to him, "Woe to thee! Thou hast sinned a great sin and the time of thy survival hath been long[3]; but needs must we put thee to death, because there is no ease for us in thy life till we take it." Quoth the youth, "Know O king, that I, by Allah, am guiltless, and by reason of this I hope for life, for that he who is innocent of all offence goeth not in fear of pains and penalties, neither greateneth his mourning and his concern; but whoso hath sinned, needs must his sin be expiated upon him, though his life be prolonged, and it shall overtake him, even as it overtook Dádbín the king and his Wazir." Asked Azadbakht, "How was that?" and the youth said, "Hear, O king (whose days may Allah increase!),

1 A fancy name intended to be Persian.
2 *i.e.*, thy Harem, thy women.
3 *i.e.*, thy life hath been unduly prolonged.

THE STORY OF KING DADBIN AND HIS WAZIRS.[1]

There was once a king in the land of Tabaristan,[2] by name Dádbín, and he had two Wazirs, one called Zorkhan and the other Kárdán.[3] The Minister Zorkhan had a daughter, there was not in her day a fairer than she nor yet a chaster or a more pious, for she was a faster, a prayer and an adorer of Allah the Almighty, and her name was Arwà.[4] Now Dadbin, the king, heard tell of her praises; so his heart clave to her and he called the Wazir her sire and said to him, "I desire of thee that thou marry me to thy daughter." Quoth Zorkhan, "O my liegest lord, suffer me to consult her, and if she consent, I will marry thee with her." And the king said, "Haste thee with this." So the Minister went in to his daughter and said to her, "O my daughter, the king seeketh thee of me and desireth to marry thee." She said, "O my father, I desire not a husband, and if thou wilt marry me, marry me not but with a mate who shall be mine inferior in rank and I nobler than he, so he may not turn to other than myself nor lift his eyes upon me,[5] and marry me not to one who is nobler than I, lest I be with him as a slave-girl and a serving-woman." Accordingly the Wazir returned to the king and acquainted him with that which his daughter had said, whenas he redoubled in desire and love-longing for her, and said to her sire, "An thou marry me not to her of good grace, I will take her in thy despite and by force." The Minister again betook himself to his daughter and repeated to her the king's words, but she replied, "I want no husband." So he returned to the king and told him what she said; and he was wroth and threatened him, whereupon the father took his daughter and fled with her. When this came to the king's knowledge, he despatched troops in pursuit of Zorkhan, to stop the road upon him, whilst he himself went out and overtaking the Wazir, smote him on the head with his mace[6] and

1 See Chavis and Cazotte, "Story of Ravia (Arwà!) the Resigned." Dád-bín (Persian) = one who looks to justice, a name hardly deserved in this case.

2 For this important province and city of Persia, see Al-Mas'údi, ii 2; iv. 86, etc. It gave one of many names to the Caspian Sea. The adjective is Tabari, whence Tabaráni = native of Tiberias (Tabariyah).

3 Zor-khán = Lord Violence, and Kár-dán = Business-knower; both Persian.

4 "Arwà" written with a terminal yá is a woman's P.N. in Arabic.

5 *i.e.*, not look down upon me with eyes of contempt. This "marrying below one" is still an Eastern idea, very little known to women in the West.

6 Chavis and Cazotte call the Dabbús a "dabour" and explain it as a "sort of sceptre used by Eastern Princes, which serves also as a weapon." For the Dabbús, or mace, see vol. v. night dcxx.

slew him. Then he took his daughter by force and returning to his dwelling-place, went in to her and married her. Arwa resigned herself with patience to that which betided her and committed her case to Allah Almighty; and indeed she was used to serve Him night and day with a goodly service in the house of King Dadbin her husband. It befell one day that the king had occasion to make a journey; so he called his second Wazir Kardan and said to him, "I have a charge to commit to thy care, and it is yonder lady, my wife, the daughter of the Wazir Zorkhan, and I desire that thou keep her and guard her thy very self, because I have not in the world aught dearer than she." Quoth Kardan in his mind, "Of a truth, the king honoureth me with an exceeding honour in entrusting me with this lady." And he answered, "With love and all gladness." When the king had departed on his journey, Kardan said in himself, "Needs must I look upon this lady whom the king loveth with all this love." So he hid himself in a place, that he might espy her, and saw her surpassing description; wherefor he was confounded at her and his wit was wildered and love gat the lordship of him, so that he sent to her, saying, "Have pity on me, for indeed I perish for the love of thee." She sent back to him and replied, "O Wazir, thou art in the place of faith and confidence, so do not thou betray thy trust, but make thine inward life like unto thine outward[1] and occupy thyself with thy wife and that which is lawful to thee. As for this, 'tis mere lust, and women are all of one and the same taste.[2] And if thou wilt not be forbidden from this talk, I will make thee a byword and a reproach among folk." When the Minister heard her answer, he knew that she was chaste of soul and body; wherefore he repented with the utmost of repentance and feared for himself from the king and said, "Needs must I devise a device whereby I may destroy her; else shall I be disgraced with the king." Now when the king returned from his journey, he questioned Kardan of the affairs of his kingdom, and the Wazir answered, "All is right well, O king, save a vile matter, which I have espied here and with which I am ashamed to confront the sovran; but, if I hold my peace thereof, I fear lest other than I discover it and I shall have played traitor to the king in the matter of my warning and my trust." Quoth Dadbin,

1 *i.e.*, let thy purposes be righteous as thine outward profession.

2 See vol. v night dlxxviii. This is another *lieu commun* amongst Moslems; and its unfact requires only statement.

"Speak, for to me thou art none other than a truth-teller, a trustworthy and a loyal counsellor in whatso thou sayest, undistrusted in aught." And the Minister said, "O king, this woman to whose love thy heart cleaveth and of whose piety thou talkest and her fasting and her praying, I will plainly prove to thee that this is craft and guile." Hereat the king was troubled and said, "What may be the matter?" and the Wazir replied, "I would have thee wot that some days after thy departure, one came to me and said to me, Come, O Wazir, and look. So I went to the door of the queen's sleeping-chamber and behold, she was sitting with Abu al-Kahyr, her father's page, whom she favoureth, and she did with him what she did, and such is the manner of that which I saw and heard." When Dadbin heard this, he burnt with rage and said to one of his eunuchs,[1] "Go and slay her in her chamber." But the eunuch said to him, "O king, Allah prolong thy life! Indeed, the killing of her may not be in this way neither at this time; but do thou bid one of thine Castratos take her up on a camel and carry her to one of the trackless wolds and cast her down there; so, if she be guilty, Allah shall cause her to perish, and if she be innocent, He will deliver her, and the king shall be free from default against her; for that this lady is dear to thee and thou slewest her father by reason of thy love for her." Quoth the king, "By Allah, thou sayst sooth!" Then he bade one of his eunuchs carry her on a camel to one of the far-off wilds and cut-off wolds and there leave her and wend his ways, and he forbad her torment to be prolonged. So he took her up and betaking himself with her to the desert, left her there without provaunt or water and returned, whereupon she made for one of the hills, and ranging stones before her in form of prayer-niche, stood praying. Now it chanced that a camel-driver, belonging to Kisrà[2] the king, lost certain camels, and his lord threatened him, if he found them not, that he would slay him. Accordingly he set out and plunged into the wastes till he came to the place where the lady was, and seeing her standing at prayers utterly alone, waited till she had made an end of her orisons, when he went up to her and saluted her with the salam, saying, "Who art thou?" Quoth she, "I am a hand-maid of the Almighty." He asked, "What doest thou in this desolate place?" and she answered, "I serve Allah the Most High." When he saw her beauty and loveliness, he fell in love with her, and said to her,

1 Afterwards called his "chamberlain," *i. e.*, guardian of the Harem-door.
2 *i. e.*, Chosroes, whom Chavis and Cazotte make "Cyrus."

"Harkye! Do thou take me to mate and I will be tender to thee and use thee with exceeding ruth, and I will further thee in obedience to Allah Almighty." But she answered, saying, "I have no need of wedlock and I desire to abide here alone with my Lord and His worship; but an thou wouldst have ruth upon me and further me in the obedience of Allah the Most High, carry me to a place where there is water and thou wilt have done me a kindness." Thereupon he took her to a place wherein was running water and setting her down on the ground, left her and went his ways, marvelling at her. After he left her, he found his camels, by her blessing, and when he returned, King Kisra asked him, "Hast thou found the camels?" He answered "Yes," and acquainted him with the affair of the damsel, and detailed to him her beauty and loveliness: whereupon the king's heart clave to her and he mounted with a few men and betook himself to that place, where he found the lady and was amazed at her, because he saw her surpassing the description wherewith the camel-driver had described her to him. So he accosted her and said to her, "I am King Kisra, greatest of the kings. Wilt thou not have me to husband?" Quoth she, "What wilt thou do with me, O king, and I a woman abandoned in the waste?" And quoth he, "Needs must this be, and if thou wilt not consent to me, I will take up my abode here and devote myself to Allah's service and thy service, and with thee worship the Almighty." Then he bade set up for her a tent and another for himself, facing hers, so he might adore Allah with her, and fell to sending her food; and she said in herself, "This is a king, and 'tis not lawful for me that I suffer him for my sake to forsake his lieges and his land." Presently she said to the serving-woman, who used to bring her the food, "Speak the king that he return to his women, for he hath no need of me, and I desire to abide in this place, so I may worship therein Allah the most High." The slave-girl returned to the king and told him this, whereupon he sent back to her, saying, "I have no need of the kingship and I also desire to tarry here and worship Allah with thee in this waste." When she found this earnestness in him, she fell in with his wishes, and said, "O king, I will consent to that which thou desirest and will be to thee a wife, but on condition that thou bring me Dadbin the king and his Wazir Kardan and his chamberlain the chief Eunuch, and that they be present in thine assembly, so I may speak a word with them in thy presence, to the intent that thou mayst redouble in affection for me." Quoth Kisra, "And what is thy want unto

this?" So she related to him her story from first to last, how she was the wife of Dadbin the king and how the Wazir Kardan had misspoken of her honour. When King Kisra heard this, he redoubled in love-longing for her and affection and said to her, "Do whatso thou willest": then he let bring a litter,[1] and carrying her therein to his dwelling-place, entreated her with the utmost honour and espoused her. Presently he sent a great army to King Dadbin and fetching him and his Wazir Kardan and the Eunuch-chamberlain, caused bring them before him, they unknowing the while what he might purpose to do with them. Moreover, he caused set up for Arwa a pavilion[2] in the courtyard of his palace, and she entered it and let down the curtain before herself. When the servants had set their seats and they had seated themselves, Arwa raised a corner of the curtain and said, "O Kardan, rise to thy feet, for it besitteth not that thou sit in the like of this assembly, before this mighty King Kisra." When the Wazir heard these words, his heart fluttered and his joints were loosened and he rose to his feet of his fear. Then said she to him, "By the virtue of Him who hath made thee stand up to judgment in this standing-stead, and thou abject and humiliated, I conjure thee speak the truth and say what egged thee on to lie against me and drive me from my home and from the land of my husband and made thee practise thus against a man and a Moslem so as to slay him.[3] This is no place wherein lying availeth nor may artifice be herein." When the Wazir was 'ware that she was Arwa and heard her speech, he knew that it behoved him not to lie and that naught would avail him save truth; so he bowed his head groundwards and wept and said, "Whoso doth evil, needs must he incur it, albe his day be prolonged. By Allah, I am he who hath sinned and transgressed, and naught prompted me unto this but fear and overmastering desire and the misery writ upon my brow.[4] And indeed this woman is pure and chaste and free from all fault." When King Dadbin heard this, he beat his face and said to Kardan, his Wazir, "Allah slay thee[5]! 'Tis thou that hast parted me

1 Arab. "Tákiyah," used for the Persian Takhtrawán, common in The Nights.

2 Arab. "Kubbah," a dome-shaped tent, as elsewhere.

3 This can refer only to Abu al-Khayr's having been put to death on Kardan's charge, although the tale-teller, with characteristic inconsequence, neglected to mention the event.

4 Not referring to skull sutures, but to the forehead, which is poetically compared with a page of paper upon which Destiny writes her irrevocable decrees.

5 Said in the grimmest earnest, not jestingly, as in vol. iv, night cccxl.

and my wife and wronged me!" But Kisra the king said to him, "Allah shall assuredly slay thee, because thou hastenedst and lookedst not into thine affair, and knewest not the guilty from the guiltless. Hadst thou wrought deliberately, the unright had been made manifest to thee from the right; so when this villain Wazir purposed thy ruin, where was thy judgment and whither went thy sight?" Then he asked Arwa, "What wilt thou that I do with them?" and she answered, "Accomplish on them the ordinance of Almighty Allah[1]: let the slayer be slain and the transgressor transgressed against, even as he transgressed against us; yea, and to the well-doer weal shall be done even as he did unto us." So she gave her officers order concerning Dadbin and they smote him on the head with a mace and slew him, and she said, "This is for the slaughter of my sire." Then she bade set the Wazir on a beast and bear him to the desert whither he had caused her to be borne, leave him there without provaunt or water; and she said to him, "An thou be guilty, thou shalt suffer the punishment of thy guilt and die in the desert of hunger and thirst; but an there be no guilt in thee, thou shalt be delivered, even as I was delivered." As for the Eunuch-chamberlain, who had counselled King Dadbin not to slay her, but to cause carry her to the desert, she bestowed on him a costly robe of honour and said to him, "The like of thee it befitteth kings to hold in favour and promote to high place, for that thou spakest loyally and well, and a man is requited according to his deed." And Kisra the King made him Wali in a certain province of his empire. "Know, therefore, O king" (continued the youth), "that whoso doeth good is requited with good, and he who is guiltless of sin and offence feareth not the issue of his affair. And I, O my liege lord, am free from guilt, wherefore I hope in Allah

1 *i.e.*, the *lex talionis*, which is the essence of Moslem, and indeed, of all criminal jurisprudence We cannot wonder at the judgment of Queen Arwa. even Confucius, the mildest and most humane of lawgivers, would not pardon the man who allowed his father's murderer to live. The Moslem lex talionis (Koran ii. 173) is identical with that of the Jews (Exod. xxi. 24), and the latter probably derives from immemorial usage. But many modern Rabbins explain away the Mosaical command as rather a demand for a pecuniary mulct than literal retaliation. The well-known Isaac Aburbanel cites many arguments in proof of this position: he asks, for instance, supposing the accused have but one eye, should he lose it for having struck out one of another man's two? Moreover, he dwells upon the impossibility of inflicting a punishment the exact equivalent of the injury; like Shylock's pound of flesh without drawing blood. Moslems, however, know nothing of these frivolities, and if retaliation be demanded the judge must grant it. There is a legend in Morocco of an English merchant who was compelled to forfeit tooth for tooth at the instance of an old woman, but a profitable concession gilded the pill.

that He will show forth the truth to mine auspicious king, and vouchsafe me the victory over enemies and enviers." When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

The Sixth Day.

OF TRUST IN ALLAH.

When it was the sixth day, the wrath of the Wazirs redoubled, because they had not won their will of the youth and they feared for their lives from the liege lord; so three of them went in to him and prostrating themselves between his hands, said to him, "O king, indeed we are loyal counsellors to thy dignity and fondly solicitous for thy weal. Verily, thou persistest long in leaving this youth alive and we know not what is thine advantage therein. Every day findeth him yet on life and the talk of folk redoubleth suspicion on thee; so do thou do him dead, that the talk may be made an end of." When the king heard this speech, he said, "By Allah, verily ye say sooth and speak rightly!" Then he bade them bring the young treasurer and when he came into the presence said to him, "How long shall I look into thy case, and find no helper for thee and see them athirst for thy blood?" The youth answered, "O king, I hope for succour only from Allah, not from created beings: an He aid me, none shall have power to harm me, and if He be with me and on my side, because of the truth, from whom shall I fear, because of untruth? Indeed, I have made my intent with Allah a pure intent and a sincere, and I have severed my expectation from the help of the creature; and whoso seeketh aid of Allah findeth of his desire that which Bakhtzamán found." Quoth the king, "Who was Bakhtzaman and what is his story?" and quoth the youth, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF KING BAKHTZAMAN.[1]

There was once a king of the kings, whose name was Bakhtzaman, and he was a great eater and drinker and carouser. Now enemies of his made their appearance in certain parts of his realm, which they coveted; and one of his friends said to him, "O king,

1 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Bhazmant (!); or the Confident Man" "Bakht (-i-) Zamán" in Pers. would = Luck of the Time.

the foe intendeth for thee: be on thy guard against him." Quoth Bakhtzaman, "I reck not of him, for that I have weapons and wealth and warmen and am not afraid of aught." Then said his friends to him, "Ask aid of Allah, O king, for He will help thee more than thy wealth and thy weapons and thy warriors." But he turned a deaf ear to the speech of his loyal counsellors, and presently the enemy came upon him and waged war upon him and got the victory over him and profited him naught his trust in other than Allah the Most High. So he fled from him and seeking one of the sovrans, said to him, "I come to thee and lay hold upon thy skirts and take refuge with thee, so thou mayst help me against my foe." The king gave him money and men and a mighty many and Bakhtzaman said in himself, "Now am I fortified with this force and needs must I conquer my foe with such combatants and overcome him"; but he said not, "With the aid of Allah Almighty." So his enemy met him and overcame him again and he was defeated and put to the rout and fled at random: his troops were dispersed from him and his money lost and the enemy pursued him. Thereupon he sought the sea and passing over to the other side, saw a great city and therein a mighty citadel. He asked its name and that of its owner, and they said to him, "It belongeth to Khadídán[1] the king." So he fared on till he came to the royal palace and concealing his condition, passed himself off for a horseman[2] and sought service with King Khadidan, who attached him to his attendance and entreated him with honour; but his heart still clung to his mother-land and his home. Presently, it chanced that an enemy came out against King Khadidan; so he sent his troops to meet him and made Bakhtzaman head of the host. Then they went forth to the field and Khadidan also came forth and ranged his troops and levelled lance and sallied out in person and fought a sore fight and overcame his foe, who with his troops ignominiously fled. When the king and his army returned in triumph, Bakhtzaman said to him, "Harkye, O king! This be a strange thing I see in thee that thou art compassed about with this mighty great army, yet dost thou apply thyself in person to battle and adventurest thy life." Quoth the king, "Dost thou call thyself a knight and a learned wight and deemest that victory is in the many of men?" Quoth Bakhtzaman, "Such is indeed my

1 Chavis and Cazotte change the name to "Abadid," which, like "Khadidán," is non-significant

2 Arab "Fáris," here a Reiter, or Dugald Dalgetty, as mostly were the hordes led by the mediæval Italian Condottiéri

belief." And Khadidan the king cried, "By Allah, then, thou errest in this thy belief!" presently adding, "Woe and again woe to him whose trust is in other than Allah! Indeed, this army is appointed only for phantasy and majesty, and victory is from Allah alone. I too, O Bakhtzaman, whilome believed that victory was in the number of men,[1] and an enemy came out against me with eight hundred head, whilst I had eight hundred thousand. I trusted in the tale of my troops, whilst my foe trusted in Allah, so he defeated me and routed me and I was put to a shameful flight and hid myself in one of the mountains, where I met with a Religious who had withdrawn himself from the world. So I joined myself to him and complained to him of my case and acquainted him with all that had befallen me. Quoth the Recluse, Wottest thou why this befell thee and thou wast defeated? Quoth I, I know not; and he said, Because thou didst put thy trust in the multitude of thy war-men and reliedst not upon Allah the Most High. Hadst thou put thy trust in the Almighty and believed of Him that it is He alone who advantageth and endamageth thee, never had thy foe availed to cope with thee. Return unto Allah. So I returned to my right senses, and repented at the hands of that Religious, who said to me:—Turn back with what remaineth to thee of troops and confront thy foes, for, if their intents be changed and turned away from Allah, thou wilt overcome them, e'en wert thou alone. When I heard the Solitary's words, I put my trust in Allah of All-Might; and, gathering together those who remained with me, fell upon mine enemies at unawares in the night. They deemed us many and fled with the shamefullest flight, whereupon I entered my city and repossessed myself of my place by the might of Almighty Allah, and now I fight not but trusting in His aid." When Bakhtzaman heard these words he awoke from his heedlessness and cried, "Extolled be the perfection of God the Great! O king, this is my case and my story, nothing added and naught subtracted, for I am King Bakhtzaman and all this happened to me: wherefore I will seek the gate of Allah's mercy and repent unto Him." So he went forth to one of the mountains and worshipped Allah there awhile, till one night, as he slept, a personage appeared to him in a dream and said to him, "O Bakhtzaman, Allah accepteth thy repentance and openeth on thee the door of succour and will aid thee against thy foe." When he was assured of this in a dream, he arose and turned

1 So Napoleon the Great also believed that Providence is mostly favourable to "gros bataillons."

back, intending for his own city; and when he drew near thereunto, he saw a company of the king's retainers, who said to him, "Whence art thou? We see that thou art a foreigner and fear for thee from this king, for that every stranger who entereth this city, he destroyeth him, of his dread of King Bakhtzaman." Said Bakhtzaman, "None shall prejudice him nor profit him save Allah the Most High." And they replied, "Indeed, he hath a vast army, and his heart is fortified in the multitude of his many." When King Bakhtzaman heard this, his mind was comforted and he said to himself, "I place my trust in Allah. An He will, I shall overcome mine enemy by the might of the Lord of Omnipotence." So he said to the folk, "Wot ye not who I am?" and they said, "No, by Allah." Cried he, "I am King Bakhtzaman." When they heard this and knew that it was indeed he, they dismounted from their horses and kissed his stirrup, to do him honour, and said to him, "O king, why thus risk thy life?" Quoth he, "Indeed, my life is a light matter to me and I set my trust in Almighty Allah, looking to Him for protection." And quoth they, "May that suffice thee!" presently adding, "We will do with thee that which is in our power and whereof thou art worthy: hearten thy heart, for we will succour thee with our substance and our existence, and we are his chief officers and the most in favour with him of all folk. So we will take thee with us and cause the lieges follow after thee, because the inclination of the people, all of them, is theewards." Said he, "Do whatso Allah Almighty enableth you to do." So they carried him into the city and hid him with them. Then they agreed with a company of the king's chief officers, who had aforetime been those of Bakhtzaman, and acquainted them with this; whereat they rejoiced with joy exceeding. Then they assembled together to Bakhtzaman, and made a covenant and handfast of fealty with him and fell upon the foe and slew him and seated King Bakhtzaman again on the throne of his kingship. And his affairs prospered and Allah amended his estate and restored to him His bounty, and he ruled his subjects justly and abode in the obedience of the Almighty. "On this wise, O king," (continued the young treasurer,) "he with whom Allah is and whose intent is pure, meeteth naught save good. As for me, I have no helper other than the Almighty, and I am content to submit myself to His ordinance, for that He knoweth the purity of my intent." With this the king's wrath subsided and he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

The Seventh Day.

OF CLEMENCY.

WHEN it was the seventh day, the seventh Wazir, whose name was Bihkamál,[1] came in to the king and prostrating himself to him, said, "O king, what doth thy long-suffering with this youth profit thee? Indeed the folk talk of thee and of him. Why, then, dost thou postpone the putting him to death?" The Minister's words aroused the anger of the king, and he bade bring the youth. So they fetched him before him in fetters, and Azadbakht said to him, "Ho, woe to thee! By Allah, after this day there abideth no deliverance for thee from my hand, by reason that thou hast outraged mine honour, and there can be no forgiveness for thee." The youth replied, "O king, there is no great forgiveness save in case of a great default, for according as the offence is great in so much magnified is mercy; and it is no grace to the like of thee if he spare the like of me. Verily, Allah knoweth that there is no crime in me, and indeed He commandeth to clemency, and no clemency is greater than that which spareth from slaughter, for that thy pardon of him whom thou purposest to put to death is as the quickening of a dead man; and whoso doth evil shall find it before him, even as it was with King Bihkard." Asked the king, "And what is the story of King Bihkard." And the youth answered, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF KING BIHKARD.[2]"

There was once a king named Bihkard and he had mickle of wealth and many troops; but his deeds were evil and he would punish for a slight offence, and he never forgave any offender. He went forth one day to hunt and a certain of his pages shot a shaft, which lit on the king's ear and cut it off. Bihkard cried, "Who shot that arrow?" So the guards brought him in haste the misdemeanant, whose name was Yatrú,[3] and he of his fear fell down on the ground in a fainting fit. Then quoth the king, "Slay him"; but Yatru said, "O king, this which hath befallen was not of my choice nor of my knowledge; so

1 Pers. and Arab. = "Good perfection."

2 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Baharkan." Bihkard (in Shiraz pronounced "Kyard") = "Well he did."

3 See "Katrú" in the Introduction to the Bakhtiyár-námah

do thou pardon me, in the hour of thy power over me, for that mercy is of the goodliest of deeds and belike it shall be in this world a provision and a good work for which thou shalt be repaid one of these days, and a treasure laid up to thine account with Allah in the world to come. Pardon me, therefore, and fend off evil from me, so shall Allah fend off from thee the like evil." When the king heard this, it pleased him and he pardoned the page, albeit he had never before pardoned any. Now this page was of the sons of the kings and had fled from his sire on account of a sin he had committed: then he went and took service with Bihkard the king, and there happened to him what happened. After a while, it chanced that a man recognized him and went and told his father, who sent him a letter, comforting his heart and mind and calling upon him to return to him. Accordingly he returned to his father, who came forth to meet him and rejoiced in him, and the Prince's affairs were set right with his sire. Now it befell, one day of the days, that king Bihkard shipped him in a ship and put out to sea, so he might fish: but the wind blew on them and the craft sank. The king made the land upon a plank, unknown of any, and came forth, mother-naked, on one of the coasts; and it chanced that he landed in the country whereof the father of the page aforesaid was king. So he came in the night to the gate of the sovran's capital, and finding it shut, lodged him in a burying-place there. When the morning morrowed and the folk came forth of the city, behold, they found a man lately murthered and cast down in a corner of the burial ground, and seeing Bihkard there, doubted not but it was he who had slain him during the night; so they laid hands on him and carried him up to the king and said to him, "This fellow hath slain a man." The king bade imprison him; whereupon they threw him in jail, and he fell to saying in himself, what while he was in the prison, "All that hath befallen me is of the abundance of my sins and my tyranny, for, indeed, I have slain much people unrighteously and this is the requital of my deeds and that which I have wrought whilome of oppression." As he was thus pondering in himself, there came a bird and lighted down on the pinnacle of the prison, whereupon, of his passing eagerness in the chase, he took a stone and threw it at the bird. Now the king's son was playing in the exercise-ground with the ball and the bat,[1] and the stone lit on his ear and cut it off, whereupon the Prince fell down in a fit. So they enquired who had thrown

1 The text has "Jaukalán" for Saulaján, the Persian "Chaugán" = the crooked bat used in Polo. See vol. i. night iv.

the stone and finding that it was Bihkard, took him and carried him before the king's son, who bade do him die. Accordingly, they cast the turband from his head and were about to fillet his eyes, when the Prince looked at him and seeing him cropped of an ear, said to him, "But for thy villainies thine ear had not been cut off." Said Bihkard, "Not so, by Allah! Nay, but the story of the loss of my ear is so and so, and I pardoned him who smote me with an arrow and cut off my ear." When the Prince heard this, he looked in his face and knowing him, cried out and said, "Art thou not Bihkard the king?" "Yes," replied he, and the Prince said to him, "What ill chance threw thee here?" Thereupon he told him all that had betided him and the folk wondered and extolled the perfection of the Almighty, crying "Subhána 'llah!—laud to the Lord!" Then the Prince rose to him and embraced him and kissed him and, entreating him with respect, seated him in a chair and bestowed on him a robe of honour; and he turned to his sire and said to him, "This be the king who pardoned me and this be his ear which I cut off with a shaft; and indeed he deserveth my pardon by having pardoned me." Then said he to Bihkard, "Verily, the issue of mercy hath been a provision for thee in such hour as this." And they entreated him with the utmost kindness and sent him back to his own country in all honour. "Know, then, O king," (continued the youth,) "that there is no goodlier quality than mercy and that all thou dost of clemency, thou shalt find before thee a treasure for thee treasured up." When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

The Eighth Day.

OF ENVY AND MALICE.

When it was the eighth day, the Wazirs all assembled and had speech together and said, "How shall we do with this youth, who overcometh us with his much talk? Indeed, we fear lest he be saved and we fall into destruction. So, let us all go in to the king and unite our efforts to gain our cause, ere he appear without guilt and come forth and get the better of us." Accordingly they all went into the king and prostrating themselves before him, said to him, "O king, beware lest this youth ensorcell thee with his sorcery and beguile thee with his wiles. An thou heardest what we hear, thou wouldst not suffer him live; no, not a single day.

Wherefore heed not his speech, for we are thy Ministers, who endeavour for thy permanence, and if thou hearken not to our word, to whose word wilt thou hearken? See, we are ten Wazirs who testify against this youth that he is guilty and entered not the king's sleeping chamber save with ill intent, so he might put the king to shame and outrage his honour; and if the king slay him not, let him banish him his realm, that the tongue of the folk may desist from him." When the king heard his Ministers' words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and bade bring the youth, and when he came in to the king, the Wazirs all cried out with one voice, saying, "O Lack-wits, thinkest thou to save thyself from slaughter by guile and sleight, that thou wilest the king with thy talk and hopest pardon for the like of this mighty great crime thou hast committed?" Then the king bade fetch the sworder, so he might smite his neck; whereupon each of the Wazirs fell to saying, "I will slay him"; and they sprang upon him. Quoth the youth, "O king, consider and ponder the eagerness of these thy Ministers. Is this of envy or is it not? They would fain make severance between me and thee, so there may fall to them what they shall plunder, as aforetime." And the king said to him, "Consider their witness against thee." The young man said, "O king, how shall they testify of that which they saw not[1]? This is but envy and despight; and thou, an thou slay me, wilt indeed regret me, and I fear lest there betide thee of repentance that which betided Aylán Sháh, by reason of the malice of his Wazirs." Asked Azadbakht, "And what is his story?" and the youth answered, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF AYLAN SHAH AND ABU TAMMAM.[2]"

Whilome there was a merchant named Abu Tammám, and he was a clever man and a well-bred, quick-witted and truthful in all his affairs, and he was monied to boot. Now there was in his land a king as unjust as he was jealous, and Abu Tammam feared for his wealth from this king and said, "I will remove hence to another place where I shall not be in dread." So he made for the

1 Amongst Moslems, I have noted, circumstantial evidence is not lawful: the witness must swear to what he has seen A curious consideration, how many innocent men have been hanged by "circumstantial evidence." See vol iv. night cccxciv

2 In Chavis and Cazotte "Story of Abattamant (!), or the Prudent Man"; also Aylán Shah becomes Olensa after Italian fashion.

city of Aylan Shah and built himself a palace therein and transporting his wealth thither, took up his abode there. Presently, the news of him reached King Aylan Shah; so he sent to invite him to his presence and said to him, "We know of thy coming to us and thine entering under our allegiance, and indeed we have heard of thine excellence and wit and generosity; so welcome to thee and fair welcome! The land is thy land and at thy command, and whatsoever need thou needest of us, 'tis already accomplished to thee; and it behoveth that thou be near our person and of our assembly." Abu Tammam prostrated himself before the king, and said to him, "O king, I will serve thee with my monies and with my life, but do thou excuse me from nearness to thee, for that an I took office about thee, I should not be safe from enemies and enviers." Then he applied himself to the royal service with presents and largesses, and the king saw him to be intelligent, well-bred and of good counsel; so his heart inclined to him and he committed to him the ordinance of his affairs and the power to bind and to loose was in his hand. Now Aylan Shah had three Wazirs, in whose hands public affairs were wont to be and they had been accustomed not to quit the king night or day; but they became shut out from him by reason of Abu Tammam and the king was occupied with him to their exclusion. Herewith the Ministers took counsel together upon the matter and said, "What is your rede we should do, seeing that the king is occupied from us with yonder man, and indeed he honoureth him with more honour than us? But now come, let us devise some device whereby we may alienate him from the king." So each of them spoke forth that which was in his mind, and one of them said, "The king of the Turks hath a daughter, whose like there is not in the world, and whatso messenger goeth to demand her in marriage, him her father slaughtereth. Now our king hath no knowledge of this; so, come, let us foregather with him and bring up the mention of her: when his heart is taken with her, we will advise him to despatch Abu Tammam to seek her hand in marriage; whereupon her father will slay him and we shall be quit of him and settle his affair once for all." Accordingly, they went in to the king one day (Abu Tammam being present among them), and mentioned the affair of the damsel, the daughter of the Turks' king, and enlarged upon her charms, till the king's heart was taken with her and he said to them, "We will send one to demand her to wife for us; but who shall be our messenger?" Quoth the Wazirs, "There is none fit for this business but Abu Tammam, by reason of his wit and good breeding"; and the

king said, "Indeed, even as ye say, none is fitting for this affair save he." Then he turned to Abu Tammam and said to him, "Wilt thou not go with my message and seek me in marriage the daughter of the Turks' king?" and he answered, "To hear is to obey, O my Sovran!" So they made ready his affair and the king conferred on him a robe of honour, and he took with him a present and a letter under the king's hand and setting out, fared on till he came to the capital city of Turkistan. When the king of the Turks knew of his coming, he despatched his officers to receive him and entreated him with honour and lodged him as befitted his rank. Then he guested him three days, after which time he summoned him to his presence and Abu Tammam went in to him; and, prostrating himself as beseemeth before kings, laid that present before him and gave him the letter. The king read the writ and said to Abu Tammam, "We will do what behoveth in the matter; but, O Abu Tammam, needs must thou view my daughter and she view thee, and needs must thou hear her speech and she hear thine." So saying, he sent him to the lodging of the Princess, who had had notice of this; so that they had adorned her sitting-room with the costliest that might be of vessels of gold and silver and the like, and she seated herself on a chair of gold, clad in the richest of royal robes and ornaments. When Abu Tammam entered, he took thought and said, "The wise declare that whoso governeth his sight shall suffer naught unright and he who guardeth his tongue shall hear naught of foul taunt, and he who keepeth watch over his hand, it shall be lengthened and not shortened.[1]" So he entered and seating himself on the floor, cast down his eyes and covered his hands and feet with his dress.[2] Quoth the king's daughter to him, "Raise thy head, O Abu Tammam, and look on me and speak with me." But he spake not neither raised his head, and she continued, "They sent thee only to view me and talk with me, and yet behold thou sayest not a word"; presently adding, "Take of these union-pearls that be round thee and of these jewels and gold and silver." But he put not forth his hand to aught, and when she saw that he paid no heed to anything, she was angry and cried, "They have

1 In Arab. idiom a long hand or arm means power, a phrase not wholly unused in European languages. Chavis and Cazotte paraphrase "He who keeps his hands crossed upon his breast, shall not see them cut off."

2 Arab. "Jama'a atráfah," lit. = he drew in his extremities, it being contrary to "etiquette" in the presence of a superior not to cover hands and feet. In the wild Argentine Republic the savage Gaucho removes his gigantic spurs when coming into the presence of his master.

messaged me with a messenger, blind, dumb, deaf." Then she sent to acquaint her father with this; whereupon the king called Abu Tammam to him and said to him, "Thou camest not save to view my daughter: why, then, hast thou not looked upon her?" Quoth Abu Tammam, "I saw everything"; and quoth the king, "Why didst thou not take somewhat of that which thou sawest of jewels and the like? Indeed they were set out for thee." But he answered, "It behoveth me not to put out my hand to aught that is not mine." When the king heard his speech, he gave him a sumptuous robe of honour and loved him muchly[1] and said to him, "Come, look at this well." So Abu Tammam went up to the pit-mouth and looked, and behold, it was full of heads of the sons of Adam, and the king said to him, "These are the heads of envoys whom I slew, because I saw them without loyalty to their lords, and I was used, whenas I beheld an envoy without good manners, to say, He who sent him is worse-mannered than he, because the messenger is the tongue of him who sendeth him and his breeding is of his master's breeding; and whoso is after this fashion, it befitteth not that he be akin to me.[2] For this reason I used to put the envoys to death; but, as for thee, thou hast overcome us and won my daughter, of the excellence of thy manners; so hearten thy heart, for she is thy lord's." Then he sent him back to King Aylan Shah with presents and rarities and a letter, saying, "This that I have done is in honour of thee and of thine envoy." When Abu Tammam returned after accomplishing his mission and brought the presents and the letter, King Aylan Shah rejoiced in this and redoubled all his favours and showed him honour the highest. Some days after, the King of Turkistan sent his daughter and she went in to King Aylan Shah, who rejoiced in her with exceeding joy and Abu Tammam's worth was exalted in the royal sight. When the Wazirs saw this, they redoubled in envy and despite and said, "An we contrive us not a contrivance to rid us of this man, we shall die of rage." So they bethought them and agreed upon a device they should practise. Then they betook themselves to two boys, pages affected to the service of the king, who slept not but on their knee,[3] and they lay at his head, for that they were his bed-

1 About the equivalent to the Arab, or rather Egypto-Syrian form "Jiddan," used in the modern slang sense.

2 *i.e.*, that he become my son-in-law.

3 For the practice of shampooing often alluded to in The Nights, see vol ii night cxxxii. The king "sleeping on the boys' knees" means that he dropped off whilst his feet were on the laps of the lads.

chamber pages. So the Ministers gave them each a thousand dinars of gold, saying, "We desire of you that ye do somewhat we require and take this gold as a provision against your time of need." Quoth the lads, "What is it ye would have us do?" and quoth the Wazirs, "This Abu Tammam hath marred matters for us, and if his case abide in this way, he will remove us all from the king's favour; and what we want of you twain is that, when ye are alone with the king and he leaneth back, as he were asleep, one of you say to his fellow:—Verily, the king hath taken Abu Tammam into high favour and hath advanced him to exalted rank, yet he is a transgressor against the king's honour and an accursed wight. Then let the other of you ask:—And what is his transgression? and let the first answer:—He outrageth the king's honour and saith, the King of Turkistan was used, when a messenger went to him to seek his daughter in marriage, to slay him; but me he spared, because she liked me, and by reason of this her sire sent her hither, for that she loved me. Then let the other say, Knowest thou this for truth? and let the first reply:—By Allah, this is familiar to all the folk, but, of their fear of the king, they dare not divulge it to him; and as often as the king is absent a-hunting or a-wayfaring, Abu Tammam cometh to her and is private with her." Whereupon the boys answered, "We will say this." Accordingly, one night, when they were alone with the king and he leant back, as he were asleep, they said these words and the king heard all and was like to die of fury and despite and said to himself, "These are young boys, not come to years of discretion, and have no business with any; and unless they had heard these words from some one, they had not spoken thereof each with other." When it was morning wrath overmastered him, so that he stayed not neither deliberated, but summoned Abu Tammam and taking him apart, said to him, "Whoso guardeth not the honour of his liege lord,[1] what deserveth he?" Said Abu Tammam, "He deserveth that his lord guard not *his* honour." Aylan Shah continued, "And whoso entereth the king's house and playeth traitor with him, what behoveth unto him?" and Abu Tammam replied, "He shall not be left alive." Whereupon the king spat in his face and said to him, "Both these deeds hast *thou* done." Then he drew his poinard on him in haste and smiting him in the belly, slit it and Abu Tammam died forthright; whereupon the king dragged him along and cast him into a well that was in his palace. After he

1 Meaning the honour of his Harem.

had slain him, he fell into repentance and mourning increased and chagrin waxed sore upon him, and he would acquaint none who questioned him with the cause, nor, of his love for his wife, did he tell her of this, and whenever she asked him wherefore he grieved, he answered her not. When the Wazirs knew of Abu Tammam's death, they rejoiced with exceeding joy and knew that the king's sorrow arose from regret for him. As for Aylan Shah, after this he used to betake himself by night to the sleeping-chamber of the two boys and spy upon them, that he might hear what they said concerning his wife. As he stood one night privily at the door of their chamber, he saw them spread out the gold between their hands and play with it and heard one of them say, "Woe to us! What doth this gold profit us? Indeed we cannot buy therewith any thing nor spend it upon ourselves. Nay, but we have sinned against Abu Tammam and done him dead unjustly." And said the other, "Had we known that the king would slay him on the spot, we had not done what we did." When the king heard that, he could not contain himself, but rushed in upon them and said to them, "Woe to you! What did ye? Tell me." And they cried, "Amán,[1] O king!" He cried, "An ye would have pardon from Allah and me, you are bound to tell me the truth, for nothing shall save you from me but soothfastness." Hereat they prostrated themselves before him and said, "By Allah, O king, the Wazirs gave us this gold and taught us to lie against Abu Tammam, so thou mightest kill him, and what we said was their speech." When the king heard this, he plucked at his beard, till he was like to tear it up by the roots and bit upon his fingers, till he well nigh cut them in twain, for repentance and sorrow that he had wrought hastily and had not delayed with Abu Tammam, so he might consider his case. Then he sent for the Ministers and said to them, "O villainous Wazirs, ye deemed that Allah was heedless of your deed, but right soon shall your wickedness revert upon you. Know ye not that Whoso diggeth for his brother a pit shall himself fall into it[2]? Take from me the punishment of this world and to-morrow ye shall receive the punishment of the next world and requital from Allah." Then

1 Pardon, lit. = security; the cry for quarter already introduced into English

"Or raise the craven cry Aman."

It was Mohammed's express command that this prayer for mercy should be respected even in the fury of fight. See vol i. night xxxiii

2 A saying found in every Eastern language beginning with Hebrew; Proverbs xxvi. 27, "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein."

he bade put them to death; so the headsman smote off their heads before the king, and he went in to his wife and acquainted her with whatso he had misdone to Abu Tammam; whereupon she grieved for him with mighty great grief and the king and his household ceased not weeping and repenting all their lives. Moreover, they brought Abu Tammam forth of the well and the king built him a dome[1] in his palace and buried him therein. "See, then, O auspicious king," (continued the youth,) "what jealousy doth and injustice and how Allah caused the Wazirs' malice to revert upon their own necks; and I trust in the Almighty that He will empower me over all who envy me my favour with the king and shew forth the truth unto him. Indeed, I dread naught for my life from death; only I fear lest the king repent of my slaughter, for that I am guiltless of offence, and if I knew that I were guilty on any wise, my tongue would be dumb-struck." When the king heard this, he bowed his head groundwards in perplexity and confusion and said, "Restore him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

The Ninth Day.

OF DESTINY OR THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN ON THE FOREHEAD.

Now when it was the ninth day, the Wazirs met and said one to other, "Verily, this youth baffleth us, for as often as the king is minded to kill him, he beguileth him and bewitcheth him with a story; so what be your rede we should do, that we may slay him and be at rest from him?" Then they advised together and agreed that they should go to the king's wife.[2] So they betook themselves to her and said to her, "Thou art careless of this affair wherein thou art and this uncare shall not profit thee; whilst the king, occupied with eating and drinking and diversion, forgetteth that the folk beat upon tambourines and sing of thee and say, The wife of king loveth the youth; and as long as he abideth alive the talk will increase and not diminish." Quoth she, "By Allah, 'twas ye egged me

1 *i.e.*, a domed tomb where prayers and prelections of the Koran could be made "Kubbah" in Marocco is still the term for a small square building with a low mediaeval cupola under which a Santon lies interred It is the "little Waly" of our "blind travellers" in the unholy "Holy Land."

2 *i.e.*, to secure her assistance in arousing the king's wrath.

on against him, and what shall I do now?" and quoth they, "Go thou in to the king and weep and say to him,—Verily, the women come to me and inform me that I am dishonoured throughout the city, and what is thine advantage in the sparing of this youth? An thou wilt not slay him, slay me to the end that this talk may be cut off from us." So the woman arose and rending her raiment, went in to the king, in the presence of the Wazirs, and cast herself upon him, saying, "O king, is my shame not upon thee or fearest thou not shame? Indeed, this is not of the fashion of kings that their jealousy over their women should be such as this.[1] Thou art heedless and all the folk of the realm prate of thee, men and women. Either slay him, that the talk may be cut off, or slay me, if thy soul will not consent to his slaughter." Thereupon the king's wrath waxed hot and he said to her, "I have no pleasure in his continuance and needs must I slay him this very day. So return to thy palace and solace thy heart." Then he bade fetch the youth; whereupon they brought him before him and the Wazirs said, "O base of base, fie upon thee! Thy life-term is at hand and earth hungereth for thy flesh, so it may make a meal of it." But he said to them, "Death is not in your word or in your envy; nay, it is a destiny written upon the forehead: wherefore, if aught be writ upon my front, there is no help but it come to pass, and neither striving nor thought-taking nor precaution-seeking shall deliver me therefrom; even as happened to King Ibrahim and his son." Quoth the king, "Who was King Ibrahim and who was his son?" and quoth the youth, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF KING IBRAHIM AND HIS SON.[2]"

There was once a king of the kings, Sultan Ibrahim hight, to whom the sovrans abased themselves and did obedience; but he had no son and was straitened of breast because of that, fearing lest the kingship go forth of his hand. He ceased not to long for a son and to buy slave-girls and lie with them, till one of them conceived, whereat he rejoiced with passing joy and gave great gifts and the largest largesse. When the girl's months were complete and the time of her lying-in drew near, the king summoned

1 *i.e.*, so slow to avenge itself.

2 "Story of Sultan Hebriam (!), and his Son" (Chavis and Cazotte) Unless they greatly enlarged upon the text, they had a much fuller copy than that found in the Bresl. Edit.

the astrologers and they watched for the hour of child-bearing and raised their astrolabes and carefully noted the time. The hand-maid gave birth to a man-child, whereat the king rejoiced exceedingly, and the people congratulated one another with this glad news. Then the astrophils made their calculations and looked into his nativity and his ascendant, whereupon their colour changed and they were confounded. Quoth the king to them, "Acquaint me with his horoscope and ye shall have assurance of pardon and have naught to fear.[1]" They replied, "O king, this princely child's nativity denoteth that, in the seventh year of his age, there is fearful danger for him from a lion, which shall attempt to rend him: and if he be saved from the lion, there will betide a matter yet sorer and more grievous even than that." Asked the king, "What is it?" and they answered, "We will not speak, except the king command us and give us assurance from fear." Quoth the king, "Allah assure you!" and quoth they, "And he be saved from the lion, the king's destruction shall be at his hand." When the king heard this, his complexion changed and his breast was straitened; but he said to himself, "I will be watchful and do my endeavour and suffer not the lion to eat him. It cannot be that he will kill me, and indeed 'The astrologers lied.[2]'" Then he caused rear him among the wet-nurses and the noble matrons[3]; but withal he ceased not to ponder the prediction of the astrophils and verily his life was troubled. So he betook himself to the top of a high mountain and hollowed there a deep excavation[4] and made in it many dwelling-places and rooms and filled it with all that was needful of rations and raiment and what not else and laid in it pipe-conduits of water from the mountain and lodged the boy therein, with a nurse who should rear him. Moreover, at the first of each month he used to go to the mountain and stand at the mouth of the hollow and let down a rope he had with him and draw up the boy to him and strain him to his bosom and kiss him and play with him awhile, after which he would let him down again to his place and

1 A right kingly king, in the Eastern sense of the word, would strike off their heads for daring to see omens threatening his son and heir: this would be constructive treason of the highest because it might be expected to cause its own fulfilment.

2 Mahommed's Hadis "Kazzibú 'l-Munajjimúna bi Rabbi 'l-Ka'abah" = the Astrologers lied, by the Ka'abah's Lord!

3 Arab. "Khawátín," plur. of Khátún, a matron, a lady, vol. iii. night cclxii.

4 See Al-Mas'udi, chapt. xvii. (Fr. Transl. ii. 48-49) of the circular cavity two miles deep and sixty in circuit inhabited by men and animals on the Caucasus near Derbend.

return; and he was wont to count the days till the seven years should pass by. Now when arrived the time of the Fate foreordered and the Fortune graven on the forehead and there remained for the boy but ten days till the seven years should be complete, there came to that mountain hunters chasing wild beasts and, seeing a lion, they attacked him. He fled from them and seeking refuge in the mountain, fell into the hollow in its midst. The nurse saw him forthwith and escaped from him into one of the chambers; upon which the lion made for the lad and seizing upon him, tare his shoulder, after which he sought the room wherein was the nurse and falling upon her, devoured her, whilst the boy lay in a swoon. Meanwhile, when the huntsmen saw that the lion had fallen into the pit, they came to the mouth and heard the shrieking of the boy and the woman; and after awhile the cries died away, whereby they knew that the lion had slain them. Presently, as they stood by the mouth of the excavation behold, the lion came scrambling up the sides and would have issued forth: but, as often as he shewed his head, they pelted him with stones, till they beat him down and he fell; whereupon one of the hunters descended into the pit and despatched him and saw the boy wounded; after which he went to the chamber, where he found the woman dead, and indeed the lion had eaten his fill of her. Then he noted that which was therein of clothes and what not else, and notifying his mates, fell to passing the stuff up to them: lastly, he took up the boy and bringing him forth of the pit, carried him to their dwelling-place, where they dressed his wounds. He grew up with them, but acquainted them not with his affair; and indeed, when they questioned him, he knew not what he should say, because they let him down into the pit when he was a little one. The hunters marvelled at his speech and loved him with exceeding love and one of them took him to son and abode rearing him by his side and training him in hunting and horse-riding, till he reached the age of twelve and became a brave, going forth with the folk to the chase and to the cutting of the way. Now it chanced one day that they sallied forth to stop the road and fell in with a caravan during the night: but its stout fellows were on their guard; so they joined battle with the robbers and overcame them and slew them and the boy fell wounded and tarried cast down in that place till the morrow, when he opened his eyes and finding his comrades slain, lifted himself up and arose to walk the road. Presently, there met him a man, a treasure-seeker, and asked him, "Whither away, O lad?" So he told him what had

betided him and the other said, "Be of good heart, for that the tide of thy good fortune is come and Allah bringeth thee joy and gladness. I am one who am in quest of a hidden treasure, wherein is a mighty mickle of wealth. So come with me that thou mayst help me, and I will give thee monies with which thou shalt provide thyself all thy life long." Then he carried the youth to his dwelling and dressed his wounds, and he tarried with him some days till he was rested; when the treasure-seeker took him and two beasts and all that he needed, and they fared on till they came to a towering highland. Here the man brought out a book and reading therein, dug in the crest of the mountain five cubits deep, whereupon there appeared to him a stone. He pulled it up and behold it was a trap-door covering the mouth of a pit. So he waited till the foul air[1] was come forth from the midst of the pit, when he bound a rope about the lad's middle and let him down bucket-wise to the bottom, and with him a lighted waxen taper. The boy looked and beheld, at the upper end of the pit, wealth abundant; so the treasure-seeker let down a rope and a basket and the boy fell to filling and the man to drawing up, till the fellow had got his sufficiency, when he loaded his beasts and ceased working, whilst the boy looked for him to let down the rope and draw him up; but he rolled a great stone to the mouth of the pit and went his ways. When the boy saw what the treasure-seeker had done with him, he relied upon Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and abode perplexed concerning his case and said, "How bitter be this death?" for indeed the world was darkened on him and the pit was blinded to him. So he fell a-weeping and saying, "I escaped the lion and the robbers and now is my death to be in this pit, where I shall die by slow degrees." And he abode perplexed and looked for nothing but death. But as he stood pondering, behold, he heard a sound of water rushing with a thunderous noise; so he arose and walked in the pit, following the sound, till he came to a corner and heard the mighty coursing of water. Then he laid his ear to the sound of the current and hearing it rushing in great strength, said to himself, "This is the flowing of a mighty watercourse and needs must I depart life in this place, be it to-day or to-morrow; so I will throw myself into the stream and not die a slow death in this pit." Thereupon he called up his courage and gathering up his skirts, cast himself into the water,

1 Arab "Nafas" lit. = breath. Arabs living in a land of caverns know by experience the danger of asphyxiation in such places.

and it bore him along with force exceeding and carrying him under the earth, stayed not till it brought him out into a deep Wady, adown which ran a great river, that welled up from under the ground. When he found himself on the face of earth, he abode dazed and a-swoon all that day; after which he came to himself and rising, fared on along that valley; and he ceased not his wayfare, praising Almighty Allah the while, till he came to an inhabited land and a great village in the reign of the king his sire. So he entered and foregathered with the villagers, who questioned him of his case; whereupon he told them his tale, and they admired how Allah had delivered him from all those dangers. Then he took up his abode with them and they loved him much. On this wise happened it to him; but as regards the king, his father, when he went to the pit, as was his wont, and called the nurse, she returned him no answer, whereat his breast was straitened and he let down a man who found the woman dead and the boy gone, and acquainted therewith the king, who when he heard this, buffeted his head and wept with sore weeping and descended into the midst of the pit that he might see how the case stood. There he espied the nurse slain and the lion dead, but beheld not the boy; so he returned and acquainted the astrologers with the soothfastness of their saying, and they replied, "O King, the lion hath eaten him; destiny hath been wroughten upon him and thou art delivered from his hand; for, had he been saved from the lion, we indeed, by Allah, had feared for thee from him, because the king's destruction would have been at his hand." So the king ceased to sorrow for this and the days passed by and the affair was forgotten. Meanwhile the boy grew up and abode with the people of the village, and when Allah willed the accomplishing of His commandment, which no endeavour availeth to avert, he went forth with a party of the villagers to cut the way. The folk complained to King Ibrahim his father, who sallied out with a company of his men and surrounded the highwaymen Now that boy was with them, and he drew forth an arrow and launched it at them, and it smote the king and wounded him in a mortal place. So they carried him to his palace, after they had laid hands upon the youth and his comrades and brought them before the sovran, saying, "What biddest us to do with them?" Quoth he, "I am presently in trouble for myself, so bring me the astrologers." Accordingly, they brought them before him and he said to them, "Ye said to me, Thy death shall be by slaying at the hand of thy son: how, then, befalleth

it that I have got my death-hurt by yonder thieves?" The astrologers marvelled and said to him, "O king, 'tis not beyond the lore of the stars, together with the doom of Allah, that he who hath smitten thee should be thy son." When King Ibrahim heard this, he bade fetch the thieves and said to them, "Tell me truly, which of you shot the shaft that wounded me." Said they, "'Twas this youth that is with us." Whereupon the king fell to considering him and said, "O youth, acquaint me with thy case and tell me who was thy father and thou shalt have assurance of safety from Allah." The youth replied, "O my lord, I know no father; as for me, my father lodged me in a pit, with a nurse to rear me, and one day, there fell in upon us a lion, which tare my shoulder, then left me and occupied himself with the nurse and rent her in pieces; and Allah vouchsafed me one who brought me forth the pit." Then he related to him all that had befallen him, first and last; which, when King Ibrahim heard, he cried out and said, "By Allah, this is my son!" presently adding, "Bare thy shoulder." So he uncovered it, and behold, it was scarred. Then the king assembled his lords and lieges and the astrologers and said to them, "Know that what Allah hath writ upon the forehead, be it fair fortune or misfortune, none may efface, and all that is decreed to a man must perforce befall him. Indeed, this my care-taking and my endeavour profited me naught, for what weird Allah decreed for my son, he hath dreed and whatso He decreed to me I have endured. Nevertheless, I praise Allah and thank Him because this was at my son's hand, and not at the hand of another, and Alhamdolillah—laud to the Lord—for that the kingship is come to my son!" And he strained the youth to his bosom and embraced him and kissed him, saying, "O my son, this matter was after such fashion, and of my watchfulness over thee from Fate, I lodged thee in that pit; but caretaking availed not." Then he took the crown of the kingship and set it on his son's head and caused the lieges and the people do homage to him and commended the subjects to his care and enjoined to him justice and equity. And he farewelled him that night and died and his son reigned in his stead.[1] "On like wise, O king," (continued the young treasurer,) "'tis with thee. If Allah have written aught on my forehead, needs must it befall me and my speech to the king shall not avail me; no, nor my illustrating it to him with instances, against the doom of Allah. And so it is with these Wazirs, for all their eagerness and endeavour for my

1 This simple tale is told with much pathos, not of words but of sense.

destruction, this shall not profit them; because, if Allah determine to save me, He will give me the victory over them." When the king heard these words he became perplexed and said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair, for the day draweth to an end and I mean to do him dead in foulest sort, and to-morrow we will visit him with that which he meriteth."

The Tenth Day.

OF THE APPOINTED TERM,[1] WHICH, IF IT BE ADVANCED, MAY NOT BE DEFERRED, AND IF IT BE DEFERRED, MAY NOT BE ADVANCED.

When it was the tenth day (now this day was called Al-Mihrján[2] and it was the day of the coming in of the folk, gentle and simple, to the king, so they might give him joy and salute him and go forth), the council of the Wazirs agreed that they should speak with a company of the city notables. So they said to them, "When ye go in to-day to the king and salute him, do ye say to him:—O king, (to the Lord be the laud!) thou art praiseworthy of policy and procedure and just to all thy subjects; but respecting this youth whom thou hast favoured, and who nevertheless hath reverted to his base origin and done this foul deed, what is thy purpose in his continuance? Indeed, thou hast prisoned him in thy palace, and every day thou hearest his palaver and thou knowest not what the folk say." And they answered, "Hearing is obeying." Accordingly, when they entered with the folk and had prostrated themselves before the king and congratulated his majesty, he raised their several degrees. Now it was the custom of the folk to salute and go forth; but they took seat, and the king knew that they had a word they would fain address to

1 Arab. "Ajal" = the appointed day of death; also used for sudden death. See vol. i. night viii.

2 *i.e.*, the Autumnal Equinox, one of the two great festival days (the other being the New Year) of the Persians, and surviving in our Michaelmas. According to Al-Mas'údi (chap. xxi.), it was established to commemorate the capture of Zahhák (Azhi-Dahâka), the biting snake (the Hindu Ahi) of night and darkness, the Greek Astyages, by Furaydun or Feridún. Prof. Sayce (Principles of Comparative Philology, p. 11) connects the latter with the Vedic deity Trita, who harnessed the Sun-horse (Rig. v. i. 163, 2, 3), the τριτογένεια of Homer, a title of Athene, the Dawn-goddess, and Burnouf proved the same Trita to be Thraêtaona, son of Athwya, of the Avesta, who finally became Furaydún, the Greek Kyrus. See vol. iii. night cccl vii.

him: so he turned to them (the Wazirs being also present) and said, "Ask your need." Therefore they repeated to him all that the Ministers had taught them and the Wazirs also spoke with them; and Azadbakht said to them, "O folk, I would have it known to you that there is no doubt with me concerning this your speech proceeding from love and loyal counsel to me, and ye ken that, were I inclined to kill half these folk, I could do them die and this would not be hard to me; so how shall I not slay this youth and he in my power and in the hending of my hand? Indeed, his crime is manifest and he hath incurred death penalty; and I have deferred it only by reason of the greatness of the offence; for, an I do this with him and my proof against him be strengthened, my heart is healed and the heart of my whole folk; and if I slay him not to-day, his slaying shall not escape me to-morrow." Then he bade fetch the youth who, when present between his hands, prostrated to him and blessed him; whereupon quoth the king, "Woe to thee! How long shall the folk upbraid me on thine account and blame me for delaying thy death? Even the people of my city reproach me because of thee, so that I am grown a prating-stock amongst them, and indeed they come in to me and reproach me for not putting thee to death. How long shall I delay this? Verily, this very day I mean to shed thy blood and rid the folk of thy prattling." The youth replied, "O king, an there have betided thee talk because of me, by Allah, and again by Allah the great, those who have brought on thee this talk from the folk are none but these wicked Wazirs, who chatter with the crowd and tell them foul tales and ill things of the king's house; but I hope in the Most High that He will cause their malice to recoil upon their own heads. As for the king's menace of slaying me, I am in the grip of his hand; so let not the king occupy his mind with my slaughter, because I am like the sparrow in the grasp of the fowler; if he will, he cutteth his throat, and if he will, he letteth him go. As for the delaying of my death, 'tis not from the king, but from Him in whose hand is my life; for, by Allah, O king, an the Almighty willed my slaughter, thou couldst not postpone it; no, not for a single hour. And, indeed, man availeth not to fend off evil from himself, even as it was with the son of King Sulayman Shah, whose anxiety and carefulness for the winning of his wish in the matter of the new-born child availed him naught, for his last hour was deferred how many a time! and Allah saved him until he had accomplished his period and had fulfilled his life-term." Cried the king, "Fie

upon thee, how great is thy craft and thy talk! Tell me what was their tale." And the youth said, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF KING SULAYMAN SHAH AND HIS NIECE.[1]"

There was once a king named Sulayman Shah, who was goodly of policy and rede, and he had a brother who died and left a daughter; so Sulayman Shah reared her with the best of rearing and the girl became a model of reason and perfection, nor was there in her time a more beautiful than she. Now the king had two sons, one of whom he had appointed in his mind to wed her, while the other purposed to take her. The elder son's name was Bahluwán[2] and that of the younger Malik Shah,[3] and the girl was called Sháh Khátún. Now one day, King Sulayman Shah went in to his brother's daughter and kissing her head, said to her, "Thou art my daughter and dearer to me than a child, for the love of thy late father who hath found mercy; wherefore I purpose espousing thee to one of my sons and appointing him my heir apparent, so he may be king after me. Look, then, which thou wilt have of my sons,[4] for that thou hast been reared with them and knowest them." The maiden arose and kissing his hand, said to him, "O my lord, I am thine hand-maid and thou art the ruler over me; so whatever liketh thee do that same, inasmuch as thy wish is higher and honourabler and holier than mine and if thou wouldst have me serve thee as a hand-maid for the rest of my life, 'twere fairer to me than any mate." The king commended her speech and conferred on her a robe of honour and gave her magnificent gifts; after which, his choice having fallen upon his younger son, Malik Shah, he wedded her with him and made him his heir apparent and bade the folk swear fealty to him. When this reached his brother Bahluwan and he was ware that his younger brother had by favour been preferred over him, his breast was straitened and the affair was sore to him and envy entered into him and hate; but he hid this in his heart, whilst fire raged therein because of the damsel and the dominion.

1 In Chavis and Cazotte, "Story of Selimansha and his Family."

2 Arab. for Pers. Pahluwán (from Pahlau) a brave, a warrior, an athlete, applied in India to a champion in any gymnastic exercise, especially in wrestling. The Frenchman calls him "Balavan"; and the Bresl. text in more than one place (p. 312) calls him "Bahwán."

3 *i.e.*, King (Arab.) King (Persian): we find also Sultan Malik Shah= King King King

4 Arab. "Aulád-i," a vulgarism, plural for dual.

Meanwhile Shah Khatun went in bridal splendour to the king's son and conceived by him and bare a son, as he were the illuming moon. When Bahluwan saw this betide his brother, envy and jealousy overcame him; so he went in one night to his father's palace and coming to his brother's chamber, saw the nurse sleeping at the door, with the cradle before her and therein his brother's child asleep. Bahluwan stood by him and fell to looking upon his face, whose radiance was as that of the moon, and Satan insinuated himself into his heart, so that he bethought himself and said, "Why be not this babe mine? Verily, I am worthier of him than my brother; yea, and of the damsel and the dominion." Then the idea got the mastery of him and anger drave him, so that he took out a knife and setting it to the child's gullet, cut his throat and would have severed his windpipe. So he left him for dead and entering his brother's chamber, saw him asleep, with the Princess by his side, and thought to slay her, but said to himself, "I will leave the girl-wife for myself." Then he went up to his brother and cutting his throat, parted head from body, after which he left him and went away. But now the world was straitened upon him and his life was a light matter to him and he sought the lodging of his sire Sulayman Shah, that he might slay him also, but could not get admission to him. So he went forth from the palace and hid himself in the city till the morrow, when he repaired to one of his father's fortalices and therein fortified himself. On this wise it was with him; but as regards the nurse, she presently awoke that she might give the child suck, and seeing the cradle running with blood, cried out; whereupon the sleepers started up and the king was aroused and making for the place, found the child with his throat cut and the bed running over with blood and his father dead with a slit weasand in his sleeping chamber. They examined the child and found life in him and his windpipe whole and they sewed up the place of the wound: then the king sought his son Bahluwan, but found him not and saw that he had fled; so he knew that it was he who had done this deed, and this was grievous to the king and to the people of his realm and to the lady Shah Khatun. Thereupon the king laid out his son Malik Shah and buried him and made him a mighty funeral and they mourned with passing sore mourning; after which he applied himself to rearing the infant. As for Bahluwan, when he fled and fortified himself, his power waxed amain and there remained for him but to make war upon his father, who had cast his fondness upon the child and used to rear him on his knees and supplicate Almighty

Allah that he might live, so he might commit the command to him. When he came to five years of age, the king mounted him on horseback and the people of the city rejoiced in him and prayed for him length of life, that he might take vengeance for his father[1] and heal his grandsire's heart. Meanwhile, Bahluwan the rebel[2] addressed himself to pay court to Cæsar, king of the Roum[3] and crave aid of him in dẹbelling his father, and he inclined unto him and gave him a numerous army. His sire the king hearing of this sent to Cæsar, saying, "O glorious king of might illustrious, succour not an evil doer. This is my son and he hath done so and so and cut his brother's throat and that of his brother's son in the cradle." But he told not the king of the Roum that the child had recovered and was alive. When Cæsar heard the truth of the matter, it was grievous to him as grievous could be, and he sent back to Sulayman Shah, saying, "An it be thy wish, O king, I will cut off his head and send it to thee." But he made answer, saying, "I care naught for him: soon and surely the reward of his deed and his crimes shall overtake him, if not to-day, then to-morrow." And from that date he continued to exchange letters and presents with Cæsar. Now the king of the Roum heard tell of the widowed Princess[4] and of the beauty and loveliness wherewith she was endowed, wherefore his heart clave to her and he sent to seek her in wedlock of Sulayman Shah, who could not refuse him. So he arose and going into Shah Khatun, said to her, "O my daughter, the king of the Roum hath sent to me to seek thee in marriage. What sayest thou?" She wept and replied, "O king, how canst thou find it in thy heart to address me thus? As for me, abideth there husband for me, after the son of my uncle?" Rejoined the king, "O my daughter, 'tis indeed as thou sayest; but here let

1 Mr. Payne translates, "so he might take his father's leavings," *i.e.*, heritage, reading "Ásár," which I hold to be a clerical error for Sár = Vendetta, blood revenge (Bresl. Edit. vi. 310).

2 Arab. "Al-'Ási" the pop. term for one who refuses to obey a constituted authority and syn. with Pers. "Yághi." "Ant 'Ási?" "Wilt thou not yield thyself?" says a policeman to a refractory Fellah.

3 *i.e.*, of the Greeks: so in Kor. xxx. 1. "Alif Lam Mim, the Greeks (Al-Roum) have been defeated." Mr. Rodwell curiously remarks that "the vowel-points for 'defeated' not being originally written, would make the prophecy true in either event, according as the verb received an active or passive sense in pronunciation." But in discovering this mare's nest, a rank piece of humbug like Aio te Aeacida, etc., he forgets that all the Prophet's "Companions," numbering some 5,000, would pronounce it only in one way and that no man could mistake "ghalabat" (active) for "ghulibat" (passive).

4 The text persistently uses "Járiyah" = damsel, slave-girl, for the politer "Sabiyah" = young lady, being written in a rude and uncourtly style

us look to the issues of affairs. I must now take compt of death, for that I am a man shot in years and fear not save for thee and for thy little son; and indeed I have written to the king of the Roum and others of the kings and said, His uncle slew him, and said not that he hath recovered and is living, but concealed his affair. Now the king of the Roum hath sent to demand thee in marriage, and this is no thing to be refused and fain would we have our back strengthened with him.[1]" And she was silent and spake not. So King Sulayman Shah made answer to Cæsar with "Hearing and obeying." Then he arose and despatched her to him, and Cæsar went in to her and found her passing the description wherewith they had described her; wherefore he loved her every day more and more and preferred her over all his women and his affection for Sulayman Shah was increased; but Shah Khatun's heart still clave to her child and she could say naught. As for Sulayman Shah's son, the rebel Bahluwan, when he saw that Shah Khatun had married the king of the Roum, this was grievous to him and he despaired of her. Meanwhile, his father Sulayman Shah watched over the child and cherished him and named him Malik Shah, after the name of his sire. When he reached the age of ten, he made the folk do homage to him and appointed him his heir apparent, and after some days, the old king's time for paying the debt of nature drew near and he died. Now a party of the troops had banded themselves together for Bahluwan; so they sent to him, and bringing him privily, went in to the little Malik Shah and seized him and seated his uncle Bahluwan on the throne of kingship. Then they proclaimed him king and did homage to him all, saying, "Verily, we desire thee and deliver to thee the throne of kingship; but we wish of thee that thou slay not thy brother's son, because we are still bounden by the oaths we sware to his sire and his grandsire and the covenants we made with them." So Bahluwan granted this to them and imprisoned the boy in an underground dungeon and straitened him. Presently, the grievous news reached his mother, and this was to her a fresh grief; but she could not speak and committed her affair to Allah Almighty, for that she durst not name this to King Cæsar her spouse, lest she should make her uncle King Sulayman Shah a liar. But as regards Bahluwan the Rebel, he abode king in his father's place and his affairs prospered, while young Malik Shah lay in the souterrain four full-told years, till his favour faded and

1 So our familiar phrase "Some one to back us."

his charms changed. When He (extolled and exalted be He!) willed to relieve him and to bring him forth of the prison, Bahluwan sat one day with his chief Officers and the Lords of his land and discoursed with them of the story of his sire, King Sulayman Shah and what was in his heart. Now there were present certain Wazirs, men of worth, and they said to him, "O king, verily Allah hath been bountiful to thee and hath brought thee to thy wish, so that thou art become king in thy father's place and hast won whatso thou wishedst. But, as for this youth, there is no guilt in him, because he, from the day of his coming into the world, hath seen neither ease nor pleasure, and indeed his favour is faded and his charms changed. What is his crime that he should merit such pains and penalties? Indeed, others than he were to blame, and hereto Allah hath given thee the victory over them, and there is no fault in this poor lad." Quoth Bahluwan, "Verily, 'tis as ye say; but I fear his machinations and am not safe from his mischief; haply the most part of the folk will incline unto him." They replied, "O king, what is this boy and what power hath he? An thou fear him, send him to one of the frontiers." And Bahluwan said, "Ye speak sooth; so we will send him as captain of war to reduce one of the outlying stations." Now over against the place in question was a host of enemies, hard of heart, and in this he designed the slaughter of the youth: so he bade bring him forth of the underground dungeon and caused him draw near to him and saw his case. Then he robed him, whereat the folk rejoiced, and bound for him the banners[1] and, giving him a mighty many, despatched him to the quarter aforesaid, whither all who went or were slain or were taken. Accordingly Malik Shah fared thither with his force, and when it was one of the days, behold, the enemy attacked them in the night; whereupon some of his men fled and the rest the enemy captured; and they seized Malik Shah also and cast him into a pit with a company of his men. His fellows mourned over his beauty and loveliness, and there he abode a whole twelvemonth in evilest plight. Now at the beginning of every year it was the enemy's wont to bring forth their prisoners and cast them down from the top of the citadel to the bottom; so at the customed time they brought them forth and cast them down, and Malik Shah with them. However, he fell upon the other

1 Arab. "'Akkada lahu ráy," plur. of rá'yat, a banner. See vol. iii. night ccxvi.

men and the ground touched him not, for his term was God-guarded. But those who were cast down there were slain upon the spot and their bodies ceased not to lie there till the wild beasts ate them and the winds scattered their bones. Malik Shah abode strown in his place and aswoon, all that day and that night, and when he revived and found himself safe and sound, he thanked Allah the Most High for his safety, and rising left the place. He gave not over walking, unknowing whither he went and dieting upon the leaves of the trees; and by day he hid himself where he might and fared on at hazard all his night; and thus he did for some days, till he came to a populous part and seeing folk there, accosted them. He acquainted them with his case, giving them to know that he had been prisoned in the fortress and that they had thrown him down, but Almighty Allah had saved him and brought him off alive. The people had ruth on him and gave him to eat and drink and he abode with them several days; then he questioned them of the way that led to the kingdom of his uncle Bahluwan, but told them not that he was his father's brother. So they showed him the road and he ceased not to go barefoot, till he drew near his uncle's capital, naked, anhungered, and indeed his limbs were lean and his colour changed. He sat down at the city gate, when behold, up came a company of King Bahluwan's chief officers, who were out a-hunting and wished to water their horses. They lighted down to rest and the youth accosted them, saying, "I would ask you of somewhat that ye may acquaint me therewith." Quoth they, "Ask what thou wilt"; and quoth he, "Is King Bahluwan well?" They derided him and replied, "What a fool art thou, O youth! Thou art a stranger and a beggar, and whence art thou that thou should'st question concerning the king[1]?" Cried he, "In very sooth, he is my uncle"; whereat they marvelled and said, "'Twas one catch-question[2] and now 'tis become two." Then said they to him, "O youth, it is as if thou wert Jinn-mad. Whence comest thou to claim kinship with the king? Indeed, we know not that he hath any kith and kin save a nephew, a brother's son, who was prisoned with him, and he despatched him to wage war upon the infidels, so that they slew him." Said Malik Shah, "I am he and they slew me not, but there befell me this and that." They

1 *i.e.*, "What concern hast thou with the king's health?" The question is offensively put.

2 Arab. "Masalah," a question; here an enigma.

knew him forthwith and rising to him, kissed his hands and rejoiced in him and said to him, "O our lord, thou art indeed a king and the son of a king, and we desire thee naught but good and we pray for thy continuance. Look how Allah hath rescued thee from this wicked uncle, who sent thee to a place whence none ever came off safe and sound, purposing not in this but thy destruction; and indeed thou fellest upon death from which Allah delivered thee. How, then, wilt thou return and cast thyself again into thine foeman's hand? By Allah, save thyself and return not to him this second time. Haply thou shalt abide upon the face of the earth till it please Almighty Allah to receive thee; but, an thou fall again into his hand, he will not suffer thee to live a single hour." The Prince thanked them and said to them, "Allah reward you with all weal, for indeed ye give me loyal counsel; but whither would ye have me wend?" Quoth they, "To the land of the Roum, the abiding-place of thy mother." "But," quoth he, "my grandfather, Sulayman Shah, when the king of the Roum wrote to him demanding my mother in marriage, hid my affair and secreted my secret; and she hath done the same, and I cannot make her a liar." Rejoined they, "Thou sayest sooth, but we desire thine advantage, and even wert thou to take service with the folk, 'twere a means of thy continuance." Then each and every of them brought out to him money and gave him a modicum and clad him and fed him and fared on with him the length of a parasang, till they brought him far from the city, and letting him know that he was safe, departed from him, whilst he journeyed till he came forth of his uncle's reign and entered the dominion of the Roum. Then he made a village and taking up his abode therein, applied himself to serving one there in earing and seeding and the like. As for his mother, Shah Khatun, great was her longing for her child and she thought of him ever and news of him was cut off from her, so her life was troubled and she foresware sleep and could not make mention of him before King Cæsar her spouse. Now she had a Castrato who had come with her from the court of her uncle King Sulayman Shah, and he was intelligent, quick-witted, right-reded. So she took him apart one day and said to him, shedding tears the while, "Thou hast been my Eunuch from my childhood to this day; canst thou not therefore get me tidings of my son, seeing that I cannot speak of his matter?" He replied, "O my lady, this is an affair which thou hast concealed from the commencement, and were

thy son here, 'twould not be possible for thee to entertain him, lest[1] thine honour be smirched with the king; for they would never credit thee, since the news hath been bruited abroad that thy son was slain by his uncle." Quoth she, "The case is even as thou sayest and thou speakest sooth; but, provided I know that my son is alive, let him be in these parts pasturing sheep and let me not sight him nor he sight me." He asked, "How shall we manage in this matter?" and she answered, "Here be my treasures and my wealth: take all thou wilt and bring me my son or else tidings of him." Then they devised a device between them, which was that they should feign some business in their own country, to wit that she had wealth there buried from the time of her husband, Malik Shah, and that none knew of it but this Eunuch who was with her, so it behoved him to go fetch it. Accordingly she acquainted the king her husband with that and sought his permit for the Eunuch to fare: and the king granted him leave of absence for the journey and charged him devise a device, lest he come to grief. The Castrato, therefore, disguised himself in merchant's habit and repairing to Bahluwan's city, began to make espial concerning the youth's case; whereupon they told him that he had been prisoned in a souterrain and that his uncle had released him and despatched him to such a place, where they had slain him. When the Eunuch heard this, the mishap was grievous to him and his breast was straitened and he knew not what to do. It chanced one day of the days that a certain of the horsemen, who had fallen in with the young Malik Shah by the water and clad him and given him spending-money, saw the Eunuch in the city, habited as a merchant, and recognising him, questioned him of his case and of the cause of his coming. Quoth he, "I came to sell merchandise"; and quoth the horseman, "I will tell thee somewhat, an thou canst keep it secret." Answered the Neutral, "That I can! What is it?" and the other said, "We met the king's son Malik Shah, I and sundry of the Arabs who were with me, and saw him by such a water and gave him spending-money and sent him towards the land of the Roum, near his mother, for that we feared for him lest his uncle Bahluwan slay him." Then he told him all that had passed between them, whereat the Eunuch's countenance changed and he said to the cavalier, "Thou art safe!" The knight replied, "Thou also art safe though thou come

1 Arab. "Liallá" (*i. e.*, li, an, lá) lest; but printed here and elsewhere with the yá as if it were "laylan," = for a single night.

in quest of him." And the Eunuch rejoined, saying, "Truly, that is my errand: there is no rest for his mother lying down or rising up, and she hath sent me to seek news of him." Quoth the cavalier, "Go in safety, for he is in a quarter of the land of the Roum, even as I said to thee." The Castrato thanked him and blessed him and mounting, returned upon his road, following the trail, whilst the knight rode with him to a certain highway, when he said to him, "This is where we left him." Then he took leave of him and returned to his own city, whilst the Eunuch fared on along the road, enquiring in every village he entered of the youth, by the description which the rider had given him, and he ceased not thus to do till he came to the village wherein was young Malik Shah. So he entered, and dismounting, made enquiry after the Prince, but none gave him news of him; whereat he abode perplexed concerning his affair and made ready to depart. Accordingly he mounted his horse; but, as he passed through the village, he saw a cow bound with a rope and a youth asleep by her side, heading the halter in hand; so he looked at him and passed on and heeded him not in his heart; but presently he halted and said to himself, "An the youth whom I am questing have become the like of this sleeping youth whom I passed but now, how shall I know him? Alas, the length of my travail and travel! How shall I go about in search of a somebody I know not, one whom, if I saw him face to face I should not know?" So saying he turned back, musing anent that sleeping youth, and coming to him, he still sleeping, dismounted from his mare and sat down by his side. He fixed his eyes upon his face and considered him awhile and said in himself, "For aught I wot, this youth may be Malik Shah"; then he began hemming and saying, "Harkye, O youth!" Whereupon the sleeper awoke and sat up; and the Eunuch asked him, "Who be thy father in this village and where be thy dwelling?" The youth sighed and replied, "I am a stranger"; and quoth the Castrato, "From what land art thou and who is thy sire?" Quoth the other, "I am from such a land," and the Eunuch ceased not to question him and he to answer his queries, till he was certified of him and knew him. So he rose and embraced him and kissed him and wept over his case: he also told him that he was wandering about in search of him and informed him that he was come privily from the king, his mother's husband, and that his mother would be satisfied to weet that he was alive and well, though she saw him not. Then he re-entered the village and buying the Prince a horse, mounted him and they ceased not going till they came to the frontier of

their own country, where there fell robbers upon them by the way and took all that was with them and pinioned them; after which they threw them into a pit hard by the road and went their ways and left them to die there; and indeed they had cast many folk into that pit and they had perished. The Eunuch fell a weeping in the pit and the youth said to him, "What is this weeping and what shall it profit here?" Quoth the Castrato, "I weep not for fear of death, but of ruth for thee, and the cursedness of thy case and because of thy mother's heart and for that which thou hast suffered of horrors and that thy death should be this ignoble death, after the endurance of all manner dire distresses." But the youth said, "That which hath betided me was writ to me and that which is written none hath power to efface; and if my life-term be advanced, none may defer it.[1]" Then the twain passed that night and the following day and the next night and the next day in the hollow, till they were weak with hunger and came nigh upon death and could but groan feebly. Now it fortuned by the decree of Almighty Allah and His destiny, that Cæsar, king of the Greeks, the spouse of Malik Shah's mother Shah Khatun, went forth a-hunting that morning. He flushed a head of game, he and his company, and chased it, till they came up with it by that pit, whereupon one of them lighted down from his horse, to slaughter it, hard by the mouth of the hollow. He heard a sound of low moaning from the sole of the pit; whereat he arose and mounting his horse, waited till the troops were assembled. Then he acquainted the king with this and he bade one of his servants descend into the hollow: so the man climbed down and brought out the youth and the Eunuch in fainting condition. They cut their pinion-bonds and poured wine down their throats, till they came to themselves, when the king looked at the Eunuch and recognising him, said, "Harkye, Such-an-one!" The Castrato replied, "Yes, O my lord the king," and prostrated himself to him; whereat the king wondered with exceeding wonder and asked him, "How camest thou to this place and what hath befallen thee?" The Eunuch answered, "I went and took out the treasure and brought it thus far; but the evil eye was behind me and I unknowing. So the thieves took us alone here and seized the money and cast us into this pit that we might die the slow death of hunger, even as they had done with others; but Allah the Most High sent thee, in pity to us." The king marvelled, he and his, and praised the Lord for that he had

1 *i.e.*, if my death be fated to befall to-day, none may postpone it to a later date

come thither; after which he turned to the Castrato and said to him, "What is this youth thou hast with thee?" He replied, "O king, this is the son of a nurse who belonged to us, and we left him when he was a little one. I saw him to-day and his mother said to me, 'Take him with thee': so this morning I brought him that he might be a servant to the king, for that he is an adroit youth and a clever." Then the king fared on, he and his company, and with them the Eunuch and the youth, who questioned his companion of Bahluwan and his dealing with his subjects, and he replied, saying, "As thy head liveth, O my lord the king, the folk are in sore annoy with him and not one of them wisheth a sight of him, be they high or low." When the king returned to his palace, he went in to his wife, Shah Khatun, and said to her, "I give thee the glad tidings of thine Eunuch's return"; and he told her what had betided and of the youth whom he had brought with him. When she heard this, her wits fled and she would have screamed, but her reason restrained her, and the king said to her, "What is this? Art thou overcome with grief for the loss of the monies or for that which hath befallen the Eunuch?" Said she, "Nay, as thy head liveth, O king! but women are weaklings." Then came the Castrato and going in to her, told her all that had happened to him and also acquainted her with her son's case and with that which he had suffered of distresses and how his uncle had exposed him to slaughter, and he had been taken prisoner and they had cast him into the pit and hurled him from the highmost of the citadel and how Allah had delivered him from these perils, all of them; and whilst he recounted to her all this, she wept. Then she asked him, "When the king saw him and questioned thee of him, what was it thou saidst him?" and he answered, "I said to him:—This is the son of a nurse who belonged to us. We left him a little one and he grew up; so I brought him, that he might be servant to the king." Cried she, "Thou didst well"; and she charged him to serve the Prince with faithful service. As for the king, he redoubled in kindness to the Castrato and appointed the youth a liberal allowance and he abode going in to and coming out of the king's house and standing in his service, and every day he waxed better with him. As for Shah Khatun, she used to station herself at watch for him at the windows and in the balconies and gaze upon him, and she frying on coals of fire on his account; yet could she not speak. In such condition she abode a long while and indeed yearning for him was killing her; so she stood and watched for him one day at the door of

her chamber and straining him to her bosom, bussed him on the breast and kissed him on either cheek. At this moment, behold, out came the major-domo of the king's household and seeing her embracing the youth, started in amazement. Then he asked to whom that chamber belonged and was answered, "To Shah Khatun, wife of the king," whereupon he turned back, quaking as one smitten by a leven-bolt. The king saw him in a tremor and said to him, "Out on thee! what is the matter?" Said he, "O King, what matter can be more grievous than that which I see?" Asked the king, "What seest thou?" and the officer answered, "I see that the youth, who came with the Eunuch, was not brought with him save on account of Shah Khatun; for I passed but now by her chamber door, and she was standing, watching; and when the youth came up, she rose to him and clipped him and kissed him on his cheek." When the king heard this, he bowed his head amazed, perplexed, and sinking into a seat, clutched at his beard and shook it till he came nigh upon plucking it out. Then he arose forthright and laid hands on the youth and clapped him in jail, he also took the Eunuch and cast them both into a souterrain under his palace. After this he went in to Shah Khatun and said to her, "Brava, by Allah, O daughter of nobles. O thou whom kings sought to wed, for the purity of thy repute and the fairness of the fame of thee! How seemly is thy semblance! Now may Allah curse her whose inward contrarieth her outward, after the likeness of thy base favour, whose exterior is handsome and its interior fulsome, face fair and deeds foul! Verily, I mean to make of thee and of yonder ne'er-do-well an example among the lieges, for that thou sentest not thine Eunuch but of intent on his account, so that he took him and brought him into my palace and thou hast trampled[1] my head with him; and this is none other than exceeding boldness; but thou shalt see what I will do with you all." So saying, he spat in her face and went out from her; whilst Shah Khatun said nothing, well knowing that, an she spoke at that time, he would not credit her speech. Then she humbled herself in supplication to Allah Almighty and said, "O God the Great, Thou knowest the things by secrecy onsealed and their outwards revealed and their inwards concealed! If an advanced life-term be appointed to me, let it not be deferred, and if

1 Arab "Dusti": so the ceremony vulgarly called "Dosch" and by the Italo-Egyptians "Dosso," the riding over disciples' backs by the Shaykh of the Sa'diyah Darwayshes (Lane M.E. chapt. xxv.) which took place for the last time at Cairo in 1881.

a deferred one, let it not be advanced!" On this wise she passed some days, whilst the king fell into bewilderment and forsware meat and drink and sleep, and abode knowing not what he should do and saying to himself, "An I slay the Eunuch and the youth, my soul will not be solaced, for they are not to blame, seeing that she sent to fetch him, and my heart careth not to kill them all three. But I will not be hasty in doing them die, for that I fear repentance." Then he left them, so he might look into the affair. Now he had a nurse, a foster-mother, on whose knees he had been reared, and she was a woman of understanding and suspected him, yet dared not question him. So she went in to Shah Khatun and finding her in yet sadder plight than he, asked her what was to do; but she refused to answer. However, the nurse gave not over coaxing and questioning her, till she swore her to concealment. Accordingly, the old woman made oath that she would keep secret all that she should say to her, whereupon the Queen to her related her history, first and last, and told her that the youth was her son. With this the old woman prostrated herself before her and said to her, "This is a right easy matter." But the Queen replied, "By Allah, O my mother, I prefer my destruction and that of my son to defending myself by a plea which they will not believe; for they will say:—She pleadeth this only that she may fend off shame from herself. And naught will profit me save long-suffering." The old woman was moved by her speech and her wisdom and said to her, "Indeed, O my daughter, 'tis as thou sayest, and I hope in Allah that He will show forth the truth. Have patience and I will presently go in to the king and hear his words and machinate somewhat in this matter, Inshallah!" Thereupon the ancient dame arose and going into the king, found him with his head between his knees in sore pain of sorrow. She sat down by him awhile and bespake him with soft words and said to him,[1] "Indeed, O my son, thou consumest my vitals, for that these many days thou hast not mounted horse, and thou grievest and I know not what aileth thee." He replied, "O my mother, all is due to yonder accursed, of whom I deemed so well and who hath done this and that." Then he related to her the whole story from beginning to end, and she cried to him, "This thy chagrin is on account of a no-better-than-she-should-be!" Quoth he, "I was but considering by what death I should slay them, so the folk may take warning and repent." And quoth

1 In Chavis and Cazotte she conjures him "by the great Maichonarblatha Sarsourat" (Miat wa arba'at ashar Sûrat) = the 114 chapters of the Alcoran

she, "O my son, 'ware precipitance, for it gendereth repentance and the slaying of them shall not escape thee. When thou art assured of this affair, do whatso thou willest." He rejoined, "O my mother, there needeth no assurance anent him for whom she despatched her Eunuch and he fetched him." But she retorted, "There is a thing wherewith we will make her confess,[1] and all that is in her heart shall be discovered to thee." Asked the king, "What is that?" and she answered, "I will bring thee the heart of a hoopoe,[2] which, when she sleepeth, do thou lay upon her bosom and question her of everything thou wouldest know, and she will discover the same unto thee and show forth the truth to thee." The king rejoiced in this and said to his nurse, "Hasten thou and let none know of thee." So she arose and going in to the Queen, said to her, "I have done thy business and 'tis as follows. This night the king will come in to thee and do thou seem asleep; and if he ask thee of aught, do thou answer him as if in thy sleep." The Queen thanked her and the old dame went away and fetching the bird's heart, gave it to the king. Hardly was the night come, when he went in to his wife and found her lying back, a-slumbering; so he sat down by her side and laying the hoopoe's heart on her breast, waited awhile, so he might be assured that she slept. Then said he to her, "Shah Khatun,[3] Shah Khatun, is this my reward from thee?" Quoth she, "What offence have I committed?" and quoth he, "What offence can be greater than this? Thou sentest after yonder youth and broughtest him hither, on account of the lust of thy heart, so thou mightest do with him that for which thou lustedst." Said she, "I know not carnal desire. Verily, among thy pages are those who are comelier and seemlier than he; yet have I never desired one of them." He asked "Why, then, didst thou lay hold of him and kiss him?" And she answered, "This youth is my son and a piece of my liver;

1 I have noted that Moslem law is not fully satisfied without such confession which, however, may be obtained by the bastinado

2 The Hudhud, so called from its cry "Hood! Hood!" It is the Lat upupa, Gr ἔποψ from its supposed note epip or upup; the old Egyptian Kukufa, Heb. Dukiphath and Syriac Kikuphá (Bochart Hierozoicon, part ii. 347). The Spaniards call it Gallo de Marzo (March-Cock) from its returning in that month, and our old writers "lapwing" (Deut xiv. 18). This foul-feeding bird derives her honours from chapt xxvii. of the Koran (*q.v.*), the Hudhud being sharp-sighted and sagacious enough to discover water underground which the devils used to draw after she had marked the place by her bill.

3 Here the vocative Yá is designedly omitted in poetical fashion (*e.g.*, Khaliliyya—my friend!) to show the speaker's emotion. See p. 113 of Captain A. Lockett's learned and curious work the "Miet Amil" (= Hundred Regimens), Calcutta, 1814.

and of my longing and affection for him, I could not contain myself, but sprang upon him and kissed him." When the king heard this, he was dazed and amazed and said to her, "Hast thou a proof that this youth is thy son? Indeed, I have a letter from thine uncle King Sulayman Shah, informing me that his uncle Bahluwan cut his throat." Said she, "Yes, he did indeed cut his throat, but severed not the windpipe; so my uncle sewed up the wound and reared him, for that his life-term was not come." When the king heard this, he said, "This proof sufficeth me," and rising forthright in the night, bade bring the youth and the Eunuch. Then he examined his stepson's throat with a candle and saw the scar where it had been cut from ear to ear, and indeed the place had healed up and it was like a thread stretched out. Thereupon the king fell down prostrate before Allah, who had delivered the Prince from all these perils and from the distresses he had suffered, and rejoiced with joy exceeding because he had delayed and had not made haste to slay him, in which case mighty sore repentance had betided him.[1] "As for the youth," continued the young treasurer, "he was not saved but because his life-term was deferred, and in like manner, O king, 'tis with me: I too have a deferred term, which I shall attain, and a period which I shall accomplish, and I trust in Almighty Allah that He will give me the victory over these villain Wazirs." When the youth had made an end of his speech, the king said, "Restore him to the prison"; and when they had done this, he turned to the Ministers and said to them, "Yonder youth lengtheneth his tongue upon you, but I know your tenderness for the weal of mine empire and your loyal counsel to me; so be of good heart, for all that ye advise me I will do." They rejoiced when they heard these words, and each of them said his say. Then quoth the king, "I have not deferred his slaughter but to the intent that the talk might be prolonged and that words might abound, yet shall he now be slain without let or stay, and I desire that forthright ye set up for him a gibbet without the town and that the crier cry among the folk bidding them assemble and take him and carry him in procession to the gibbet, with the crier crying before him and saying:—This is the reward of him whom the king delighted to favour and who hath betrayed him!" The Wazirs rejoiced when they heard this, and for their joy slept not that night; and they made proclamation in the city and set up the gallows.

1 The story-teller introduces this last instance with considerable art as a preface to the dénoûment.

The Eleventh Day.

OF THE SPEEDY RELIEF OF ALLAH.

WHEN it was the eleventh day, the Wazirs repaired in early morning to the king's gate and said to him, "O king, the folk are assembled from the portals of the palace to the gibbet, to the end they may see the king's order carried out on the youth." So Azadbakht bade fetch the prisoner and they brought him; whereupon the Ministers turned to him and said to him, "O vile of birth, can any lust for life remain with thee and canst thou hope for deliverance after this day?" Said he, "O wicked Wazirs, shall a man of understanding renounce all esperance in Almighty Allah? Howsoever a man be oppressed, there cometh to him deliverance from the midst of distress and life from the midst of death, as in the case of the prisoner and how Allah delivered him." Asked the king, "What is his story?" and the youth answered, saying, "O king, they tell

THE STORY OF THE PRISONER AND HOW ALLAH GAVE HIM RELIEF.[1]"

There was once a king of the kings, who had a high palace, overlooking his prison, and he used to hear in the night one saying, "O ever-present Deliverer, O Thou whose deliverance is aye present, relieve Thou me!" One day the king waxed wroth and said, "Yonder fool looketh for relief from the pains and penalties of his crime." Then said he to his officers, "Who is in yonder jail?" and said they, "Folk upon whom blood hath been found.[2]" Hearing this the king bade bring that man before him and said to him, "O fool, O little of wit, how shalt thou be delivered from this prison, seeing that thy crime is mortal?" Then he committed him to a company of his guards and said to them, "Take this wight and crucify him within sight of the city." Now it was the night season. So the soldiers carried him without the city, thinking to crucify him, when behold, there came out upon them robbers and fell upon them with swords and other weapons. Thereat the guards left him whom they proposed to slay, and fled whilst the man who was going to

1 See Chavis and Cazotte "Story of the King of Haram and the slave."
2 *i.e.*, men caught red-handed

slaughter also took to flight and plunging deep into the desert, knew not whither he went before he found himself in a copse and there came out upon him a lion of terrible aspect, who snatched him up and cast him under him. Then he went up to a tree and uprooting it, covered the man therewithal and made off into the thicket, in quest of the lioness.[1] As for the man, he committed his affair to Allah the Most High, relying upon Him for deliverance, and said to himself, "What is this affair?" Then he removed the leaves from himself and rising, saw great plenty of men's bones there, of those whom the lion had devoured. He looked again and behold, he saw a heap of gold lying alongside a purse-belt[2]; whereat he marvelled and gathering up the gold in the breast of his gaberdine, went forth of the copse and fled at hap-hazard, turning neither to the right nor to the left, in his fear of the lion; nor did he cease flying till he came to a village and cast himself down, as he were dead. He lay there till the day appeared and he was rested from his travail, when he arose and burying the gold, entered the village. Thus Allah gave him relief and he got the gold. Then said the king, "How long wilt thou beguile us, O youth, with thy prate? But now the hour of thy slaughter is come." So he bade crucify him upon the gibbet. But as they were about to hoist him up, lo and behold! the Captain of the thieves, who had found him and reared him, came up at that moment and asked, "What be this assembly and the cause of the crowds here gathered together?" They informed him that a page of the king had committed a mighty great crime and that he was about to do him die; so the Captain of the thieves pressed forward and looking upon the prisoner, knew him, whereupon he went up to him and strained him to his bosom and threw his arms round his neck, and fell to kissing him upon his mouth.[3] Then said he, "This is a boy I found under such a mountain, wrapped in a gown of brocade, and I reared him and he fell to cutting the way with us. One day, we set upon a caravan, but they put us to flight and wounded some of us and took the lad and ganged their gait. From that day to this I have gone round about the lands seeking him, but

1 Arab. "Libwah," one of the multitudinous names for the king of beasts, still used in Syria where the animal has been killed out, soon to be followed by the bear *(U. Syriacus)*. The author knows that lions are most often found in couples.

2 Arab. "Himyán or Hamyán," = a girdle.

3 As he would kiss a son. I have never yet seen an Englishman endure these masculine kisses, formerly so common in France and Italy, without showing clearest signs of his disgust.

have not found news of him till now; and this is he." When the king heard this, he was assured that the youth was his very son; so he cried out at the top of his voice and casting himself upon him, embraced him and kissed him and shedding tears, said, "Had I put thee to death, as was mine intent, I should have died of regret for thee." Then he cut his pinion-bonds and taking his crown from his head, set it on the head of his son, whereupon the people raised cries of joy, whilst the trumpets blared and the kettledrums beat and there befell a mighty great rejoicing. They decorated the city and it was a glorious day; even the birds stayed their flight in the welkin, for the greatness of the greeting and the clamour of the crying. The army and the folk carried the prince to the palace in splendid procession, and the news came to his mother Bahrjaur, who fared forth and threw herself upon him. Moreover, the king bade open the prison and bring forth all who were therein, and they held high festival seven days and seven nights and rejoiced with a mighty rejoicing. Thus it betided the youth; but as regards the Ministers, terror and silence, shame and affright, fell upon them and they gave themselves up for lost. After this the king sat, with his son by his side and the Wazirs on their knees before him, and summoned his chief officers and the subjects of the city. Then the prince turned to the Ministers and said to them, "See, O villain Wazirs, the work of Allah and his speedy relief." But they answered ne'er a syllable and the king said, "It sufficeth me that there is nothing alive but rejoiceth with me this day, even to the birds in the sky, but ye, your breasts are straitened. Indeed, this is the greatest of hostility in you mewards, and had I hearkened to you, my regret had been prolonged and I had died miserably of sorrow." Quoth the Prince, "O my father, but for the fairness of thy thought and thy perspicacity and thy longanimity and deliberation in affairs, there had not betided thee this great joy. Hadst thou slain me in haste, repentance would have been sore on thee and longsome annoy, and on this wise whoso preferreth haste shall rue." Presently the king sent for the Captain of the robbers and bade indue him with a robe of honour, commanding that all who loved the king should doff their dresses and cast them upon him.[1] So there fell robes of honour on him, till he was a-wearied with their weight, and Azadbakht invested him with the mastership

1 A cheap way of rewarding merit, not confined to Eastern monarchs, but practised by all contemporary Europe.

of the police of his city. Then he bade set up other nine gibbets by the side of the first and said to his son, "Thou art innocent, and yet these villain Wazirs strave for thy slaughter." Replied the prince, "O my sire, I had no fault in their eyes but that I was a loyal counsellor to thee and still kept watch over thy wealth and withdrew their hands from thy hoards and treasuries; wherefore they were jealous and envied me and plotted against me and planned to slay me." Quoth the king, "The time of retribution is at hand, O my son; but what be thy rede we should do with them in requital of that they did with thee? And indeed they have striven for thy slaughter and exposed thee to disgrace and smirched mine honour among the kings." Then he turned to the Wazirs and said to them, "Woe to you! What liars ye are! And is aught of excuse left to you?" Said they, "O king, there remaineth no excuse for us and we are houghed[1] by the deed we would have done to him. Indeed we planned evil to this youth and it hath reverted upon us, and we plotted mischief against him and it hath overtaken us; yea, we digged for him a pit and we ourselves have fallen into it." So the king bade hoist up the Wazirs upon the gibbets and crucify them there, because Allah is just and decreeth that which is due. Then Azadbakht and his wife and son abode in joyance and gladness, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and they died all; and extolled be the Living One, who dieth not, to whom be glory and whose mercy be upon us for ever and ever! Amen.

JA'AFAR BIN YAHYA AND ABD AL-MALIK BIN SALIH THE ABBASIDE.[2]

It is told of Ja'afar bin Yahyà the Barmecide that he sat down one day to wine and, being minded to be private, sent for his boon-companions, with whom he was most familiar, and charged the chamberlain that he suffer none of the creatures of Almighty Allah to enter, save a man of his cup-mates, by name Abd al-Malik bin Sálih, who was behindhand with them. Then they donned brightly-dyed dresses,[3] for it was their wont, as often as

1 Arab "Kasf," = houghing a camel so as to render it helpless. The passage may read, "we are broken to bits (Kisf) by our own sin"

2 Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. pp. 251-4, night dlxv.

3 See vol. v. night dxciv. A Moslem should dress for public occasions, like the mediæval student, *in vestibus* (quasi) *nigris aut subfuscis;* though not, except amongst the Abbasides, absolutely black, as sable would denote Jewry.

they sat in the wine-séance, to endue raiment of red and yellow and green silk, and they sat down to drink, and the cups went round and the lutes thrilled and shrilled. Now there was a man of the kinsfolk of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, by name Abd al-Malik bin Salih[1] bin Ali bin Abdallah bin al-Abbas,[2] who was great of gravity and sedateness, piety and propriety, and Al-Rashid used instantly to require that he should company him in converse and carouse and drink with him and had offered him to such end abounding wealth, but he never would. It fortuned that this Abd al-Malik bin Salih came to the door of Ja'afar bin Yahya, so he might bespeak him of certain requisitions of his, and the chamberlain, doubting not but he was the Abd al-Malik bin Salih aforesaid (whom Ja'afar had permitted him admit and that he should suffer none but him to enter), allowed him to go in to his master. Accordingly Abd al-Malik went in, garbed in black, with his Rusáfiyah[3] on his head. When Ja'afar saw him, his reason was like to depart for shame and he understood the case, to wit, that the chamberlain had been deceived by the likeness of the name; and Abd al-Malik also perceived how the matter stood and perplexity was manifest to him in Ja'afar's face. So he put on a cheery countenance and said, "No harm be upon you[4]! Bring us of these dyed clothes." Thereupon they brought him a dyed robe[5] and he donned it and sat discoursing gaily with

1 A well-known soldier and statesman, noted for piety and austerity. A somewhat fuller version of this story, from which I have borrowed certain details, is given in the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn Khallikán (i. 303-4). The latter, however, calls the first Abd al-Malik "Ibn Bahrán" (in the index Ibn Bahrám), which somewhat spoils the story. "Ibn Khallikan," by-the-by, is derived popularly from "Khalli" (let go), and "Kána" (it was, enough), a favourite expression of the author, which at last superseded his real name, Abu al-Abbás Ahmad. He is better off than the companion nicknamed by Mohammed Abú Horayrah = Father of the She-kitten (not the cat), and who in consequence has lost his true name and pedigree.

2 In Ibn Khallikan (i. 303) he is called the "Hashimite," from his ancestor, Hashim ibn Abd Manáf. The Hashimites and Abbasides were fine specimens of the Moslem "Pharisee," as he is known to Christians, not the noble Purushi of authentic history.

3 Meaning a cap, but of what shape we ignore. Ibn Khallikan afterwards calls it a "Kalansúa," a word still applied to a mitre worn by Christian priests

4 Arab. "Lá baas," equivalent in conversation to our "No matter," and "All right."

5 As a member of the reigning family, he wore black clothes, that being the especial colour of the Abbasides, adopted by them in opposition to the rival dynasty of the Ommiades, whose family colour was white, that of the Fatimites being green. The Moslems borrowed their sacred green, "the hue of the Pure," from the old Nabatheans, and the other primitive colours from the tents of the captains who were thus distinguished. Hence also amongst the Turks and Tartars, the White Horde and the Black Horde.

Ja'afar and jesting with him. Then said he, "Allow us to be a partaker in your pleasures, and give us to drink of your Nabíz.[1]" So they brought him a silken robe and poured him out a pint, when he said, "We crave your indulgence, for we have no wont of this." Accordingly Ja'afar ordered a flagon of Nabiz be set before him, that he might drink whatso he pleased. Then, having anointed himself with perfumes, he chatted and jested with them till Ja'afar's bosom broadened and his constraint ceased from him and his shame, and he rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and asked Abd al-Malik, "What is thine errand? Inform me thereof, for I cannot sufficiently acknowledge thy courtesy." Answered the other, "I come (amend thee Allah!) on three requirements, of which I would have thee bespeak the Caliph; to wit, firstly, I have on me a debt to the amount of a thousand thousand dirhams,[2] which I would have paid: secondly, I desire for my son the office of Wali or governor of a province,[3] whereby his rank may be raised: and thirdly, I would fain have thee marry him to Al-'Áliyah, the daughter of the Commander of the Faithful, for that she is his cousin and he is a match for her." Ja'afar said, "Allah accomplisheth unto thee these three occasions. As for the money, it shall be carried to thy house this very hour: as for the government, I make thy son Viceroy of Egypt; and as for the marriage, I give him to mate Such-an-one, the daughter of our lord the Prince of True Believers, at a dowry of such and such a sum. So depart in the assurance of Allah Almighty." Accordingly Abd al-Malik went away much astonished at Ja'afar's boldness in undertaking such engagements. He fared straight for his house, whither he found that the money had preceded him, and on the morrow Ja'afar presented himself before Al-Rashid and acquainted him with what had passed, and that he had appointed Abd al-Malik's son Wali of Egypt[4] and had promised him his daughter, Al-'Áliyah to wife. The Caliph was pleased to approve of this, and he confirmed the appointment and the marriage. Then he sent for the young man and he went not forth of the

1 The word has often occurred, meaning date-wine or grape-wine. Ibn Khaldún contends that in Ibn Khallikan it here means the former.

2 = £25,000. Ibn Khallikan (i. 304) makes the debt four millions of dirhams or £90,000—£100,000.

3 In the Biographer occurs the equivalent phrase, "That a standard be borne over his head."

4 Here again we have a suggestion that Ja'afar presumed upon his favour with the Caliph; such presumption would soon be reported (perhaps by the *austère intrigant* himself) to the royal ears, and lay the foundation of ill-will likely to end in utter destruction.

palace of the Caliphate till Al-Rashid wrote him the patent of investiture with the government of Egypt; and he let bring the Kazis and the witnesses and drew up the contract of marriage.

AL-RASHID AND THE BARMECIDES.[1]

It is said that the most wondrous of matters which happened to Al-Rashid was this. His brother Al-Hádí,[2] when he succeeded to the Caliphate, enquired of a seal-ring of great price, which had belonged to his father Al-Mahdi,[3] and it reached him that Al-Rashid had taken it. So he required it of him, but he refused to give it up, and Al-Hadi insisted upon him, yet he still denied the seal-ring of the Caliphate. Now this was on Tigris-bridge, and he threw the ring into the river.[4] When Al-Hadi died and Al-Rashid succeeded to the Caliphate, he went in person to that very place with a seal-ring of lead, which he cast into the stream at the same stead, and bade the divers seek it. So the duckers did his bidding and brought up the first ring, and this was counted an omen of Al-Rashid's good fortune and of the continuance of his reign.[5] When Al-Rashid came to the throne,

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. pp. 258-60, night dlxvii.

2 Fourth Abbaside, A.D. 785-786, vol. iv. night cccxcii. He was a fantastic tyrant who was bent upon promoting to the Caliphate his own son, Ja'afar; he cast Harun into prison and would probably have slain him but for the intervention of the mother of the two brothers, Khayzarán, widow of Al-Mahdi, and Yahya the Barmecide.

3 Third Abbaside, A.D. 775-785, vol. v. night dcxcv.; vol. vii. night dccccl.xxxv.

4 This reminds us of the Bir Al-Khátim (Well of the Signet) at Al-Madinah; in which Caliph Osman during his sixth year dropped from his finger the silver ring belonging to the founder of Al-Islam, engraved in three lines with "Mohammed | Apostle (of) | Allah |." It had served to sign the letters sent to neighbouring kings and had descended to the first three successors (Pilgrimage, ii. 219). Mohammed owned three seal-rings, the golden one he destroyed himself; and the third, which was of carnelian, was buried with other objects by his heirs. The late Subhi Pasha used to declare that the latter had been brought to him with early Moslem coins by an Arab, and when he died he left it to the Sultan.

5 Mr. Payne quotes Al-Tabari's version of this anecdote. "El-Mehdi had presented his son Haroun with a ruby ring, worth a hundred thousand dinars, and the latter being one day with his brother [the then reigning Khalif], El Hadi saw the ring on his finger and desired it. So, when Haroun went out from him, he sent after him, to seek the ring of him. The Khalif's messenger overtook Er Reshid on the bridge over the Tigris and acquainted him with his errand; whereupon the prince, enraged at the demand, pulled off the ring and threw it into the river. When El Hadi died and Er Reshid succeeded to the throne, he went with his suite to the bridge in question and bade his Vizier

he invested Ja'afar bin Yahyà bin Khálid al-Barmaki[1] with the Wazirate. Now Ja'afar was eminently noted for generosity and munificence, and the histories of him to this purport are renowned and have been documented. None of the Wazirs rose to the rank and favour whereto he attained with Al-Rashid, who was wont to call him brother[2] and used to carry him with him into his house. The period of his Wazirate was nineteen[3] years, and Yahya one day said to his son Ja'afar, "O my son, as long as thy reed trembleth,[4] water it with kindness." Men differ concerning the reason of Ja'afar's slaughter, but the better opinion is as follows. Al-Rashid could not bear to be parted from Ja'afar nor from his own sister 'Abbásah, daughter of Al-Mahdi, a single hour, and she was the loveliest woman of her day; so he said to Ja'afar, "I will marry thee to her, that it may be lawful to thee to look upon her, but thou shalt not touch her." After this time the twain used to be present in Al-Rashid's sitting chamber. Now the Caliph would get up bytimes and leave the chamber, and they being filled with wine as well as being young, Ja'afar would rise to her and know her carnally.[5] She conceived by him and bare a handsome boy; and, fearing Al-Rashid, she despatched the new-born child by one of her confidants to Meccah the Magnified (May Allah Almighty greaten it in honour and increase it in veneration and nobility and magnification!). The affair abode concealed till there befell a brabble between Abbasah and one of her hand-maidens whereupon the slave-girl discovered the affair of the child to Al-Rashid and acquainted him with its abiding-place. So, when the Caliph

Yehya ben Khalid send for divers and cause them make search for the ring. It had then been five months in the water and no one believed it would be found. However, the divers plunged into the river and found the ring in the very place where he had thrown it in, whereat Haroun rejoiced with an exceeding joy, regarding it as a presage of fair fortune."

1 Not historically correct. Al-Rashid made Yáhyà, father of Ja'afar, his Wazir; and the minister's two sons, Fazl and Ja'afar, acted as his lieutenants for seventeen years from A.D. 786 till the destruction of the Barmecides in A.D. 803 The tale-teller quotes Ja'afar because he was the most famous of the house.

2 Perhaps after marrying Ja'afar to his sister. But the endearing name was usually addressed to Ja'afar's elder brother Fazl, who was the Caliph's foster-brother.

3 Read seventeen: all these minor inaccuracies tend to invalidate the main statement.

4 Arab. "Yar'ad," which may also mean "thundereth." The dark saying apparently means, Do good whilst thou art in power and thereby strengthen thyself.

5 The lady seems to have made the first advances, and Bin Abú Hájilah quotes a sixaine in which she amorously addresses her spouse. See D'Herbelot, *s.v.* Abbassa.

pilgrimaged, he sent one who brought him the boy and found the matter true, wherefore he caused befall the Barmecides whatso befell.[1]

IBN AL-SAMMAK AND AL-RASHID.[2]

IT is related that Ibn al-Sammák[3] went in one day to Al-Rashid, and the Caliph, being athirst, called for drink. So his cup was brought him, and when he took it, Ibn al-Sammak said to him, "Softly, O Prince of True Believers! An thou wert denied this draught, with how much wouldst thou buy it?" He replied, "With the half of my reign"; and Ibn al-Sammak said, "Drink and Allah make it grateful to thee!" Then, when he had drunken, he asked him, "An thou wert denied the issuing forth of the draught from thy body, with what wouldst thou buy its issue?" Answered Al-Rashid, "With the whole of my reign"; and Ibn al-Sammak said, "O Commander of the Faithful, verily, a realm that weigheth not in the balance against a draught of water or a voiding of urine is not worth the striving for." And Harun wept.

AL-MAAMUN AND ZUBAYDAH.[4]

IT is said that Al-Maamún[5] came one day upon Zubaydah,

1 The tale-teller passes with a very light hand over the horrors of a massacre which terrified and scandalised the then civilised world, and which still haunt Moslem history. The Caliph, like the king, can do no wrong; and, as Viceregent of Allah upon Earth, what would be deadly crime and mortal sin in others becomes in his case an ordinance from above. These actions are superhuman events and fatal which man must not judge nor feel any sentiment concerning them save one of mysterious respect. For the slaughter of the Barmecides, see my Terminal Essay, vol. viii.

2 Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. pp. 260-1, night dlxviii.

3 Ibn al-Sammák (Son of the fisherman or fishmonger), whose name was Abu al-Abbás Mohammed bin Sabih, surnamed Al-Mazkúr (Ibn al-Athir says Al-Muzakkar), was a native of Kufah (where he died in A.H. 183=799-800), a preacher and professional tale-teller famed as a stylist and a man of piety. Al-Siyuti (p. 292) relates of him that when honoured by the Caliph with courteous reception he said to him, "*Thy humility in thy greatness is nobler* than thy greatness." He is known to have been the only theologician who, *ex cathedrâ*, promised Al-Rashid a place in Paradise.

4 Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. pp. 261-2, night dlxviii.

5 Seventh Abbaside, A.H. 198-227=813-842. See vol. iii. night cclxxiv. He was a favourite with his father, who personally taught him tradition; but

mother of Al-Amín,[1] and saw her moving her lips and muttering somewhat he understood not; so he said to her, "O mother mine, art thou cursing me because I slew thy son and spoiled him of his realm?" Said she, "Not so, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful!" and quoth he, "What then was it thou saidst?" Quoth she, "Let the Prince of True Believers excuse me." But he was urgent with her, saying, "There is no help but that thou tell it." And she replied, "I said, Allah confound importunity!" He asked, "How so?" and she answered, "I played one day at chess with the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and he imposed on me the condition of forfeits.[2] He won and made me doff my dress and walk round about the palace, stark naked; so I did this, and I felt incensed against him. Then we fell again to playing and I won; whereat I made him go to the kitchen and lie with the foulest and fulsomest wench of the wenches thereof; but I found not a slave-girl fouler and filthier than thy mother[3]; so I bade him tumble her. He did my bidding and she conceived by him of thee, and thus was I the cause of the slaying of my son and the spoiling him of his realm." When Al-Maamun heard this, he turned away, saying, "Allah curse the importunate!" that is, himself, who had importuned her till she acquainted him with that affair.

he offended the Faithful by asserting the creation of the Koran, by his leaning to Shi'ah doctrine, and by changing the black garments of the Banu Abbas into green. He died of a chill at Budandún, a day's march from Tarsus, where he was buried: for this Podendon = πόδα τείνειν = stretch out thy feet, see Al-Siyuti, pp. 326-27.

1 Sixth Abbaside, A.D. 809-13. See vol. iv. nights cccxcii. and cccxviii. He was of pure Abbaside blood on the father's side and his mother Zubaydah's. But he was unhappy in his Wazir Al-Fazl bin Rabi', the intriguer against the Barmecides, who estranged him from his brothers Al-Kásim and Al-Maamún. At last he was slain by a party of Persians, "who struck him with their swords, and cut him through the nape of his neck and went with his head to Tahir bin al-Husayn, general to Al-Maamún, who set it upon a garden-wall and made proclamation, This is the head of the deposed Mohammed (Al-Amín)." Al-Siyuti, pp. 306-311. It was remarked by Moslem annalists that every sixth Abbaside met with a violent death: the first was this Mohammed al-Amin surnamed Al-Makhlú' = The Deposed; the second sixth was Al-Musta'in; and the last was Al-Muktadí bi 'lláh.

2 Lit. "Order and acceptance." See the Tale of the Sandal-wood Merchant and the Sharpers: vol. v. night dcliii.

3 This is not noticed by Al-Siyuti (p. 318) who says that his mother was a slave-concubine named Marájil who died in giving him birth. The tale in the text appears to be a bit of Court scandal, probably suggested by the darkness of the Caliph's complexion.

AL-NU'UMAN AND THE ARAB OF THE BANU TAY.[1]

It is said that Al-Nu'umán[2] had two boon-companions, one of whom was hight Ibn Sa'ad and the other Amrú bin al-Malik, and he became one night drunken and bade bury them alive; so they buried them. When he arose on the morrow, he asked for them and was acquainted with their affair, whereupon he built over them a building and appointed to himself a day of ill-luck and a day of good fortune. If any met him on his unlucky day, he slew him and with his blood he washed that monument, which is a place well known in Kufah; and if any met him on his day of good fortune he enriched him. Now there accosted him once, on his day of ill-omen, an Arab of the Banú Tay,[3] and Al-Nu'uman would have done him dead; but the Arab said, "Allah quicken the king! I have two little girls and have made none guardian over them; wherefore, an the king see fit to grant me leave to go to them, I will give him the covenant of Allah[4] that I will return to him, as soon as I shall have appointed unto them a guardian." Al-Nu'uman had ruth on him and said to him, "An a man will be surety for thee of those who are with us, I will let thee go, and if thou return not I will slay him." Now there was with Al-Nu'uman his Wazir Sharík bin Amru: so the Tái[5] looked at him and said:—

Ho thou, Sharík, O Amru-son, is there fro' Death repair? * O brother to men brotherless, brother of all in care!
O brother of Al-Nu'uman an old man this day spare, * An old man slain and Allah deign fair meed for thee prepare!

Quoth Sharik, "On me be his warranty, Allah assain the king!" So the Tái departed, after a term had been assigned him for his returning. Now when the appointed day arrived, Al-Nu'uman sent for Sharik and said to him, "Verily the high noon of this day is past"; and Sharik answered, "The king hath no

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. viii. pp. 226-9, nights dclx-i.

2 King of the Arab kingdom of Hirah, for whom see vol. iv. night cccIxxxv. This ancient villain rarely appears in such favourable form when tales are told of him.

3 The tribe of the chieftain and poet, Hátim Tái, for whom see vol iii. night cclxix.

4 *i.e.*, I will make a covenant with him before the Lord. Here the word "Allah" is introduced among the Arabs of The Ignorance.

5 *i.e.*, The man of the tribe of Tay.

procedure against me till it be eventide." Whenas evened the evening, there appeared one afar off and Al-Nu'uman fell to looking upon him and on Sharik who said to him, "Thou hast no right over me till yonder person come, for haply he is my man." As he spake, up came the Tái in haste and Al-Nu'uman said, "By Allah, never saw I any more generous than you two! I know not which of you be the nobler, whether this one who became warrant for thee in death-risk or thou who returnest to thy slaughter." Then quoth he to Sharik, "What drave thee to become warrant for him, knowing the while that it was death?" and quoth he, "I did this lest it be said, Generosity hath departed from Wazirs." Then Al-Nu'uman asked the Tái, "And thou, what prompted thee to return, knowing that therein was death and thine own destruction?" and the Arab answered, "I did this lest it be said, Fidelity hath departed from the folk; for such thing would be a shame to mine issue and to my tribe." And Al-Nu'uman cried, "By Allah, I will be the third of you, lest it be said, Mercy hath departed from the kings." So he pardoned him and bade abolish the day of ill-luck; whereupon the Arab began to say:—

A many urged me that I false my faith, * But I refused whatso the wights could plead;
For I'm a man in whom Faith dwells for aye, * And every true man's word is pledge of deed.

Quoth Al-Nu'uman, "What prompted thee to keep faith, the case being as thou sayest?" Quoth he, "O king, it was my religion." Al-Nu'uman asked, "What is thy religion?" and he answered, "The Nazarene!" The king said, "Expound it to me." So the Tái expounded it to him and Al-Nu'uman became a Christian.[1]

FIRUZ AND HIS WIFE.

THEY relate that a certain king sat one day on the terrace-roof of his palace, solacing himself with the view, and presently, his wandering glances espied, on a house-top over against his palace,

1 A similar story of generous dealing is told of the Caliph Omar in The Nights. See vol. iv. night cccxcv.

2 Bres. Edit, vol. viii. pp 273-8, nights dclxxv-vi. In Syria and Egypt Firúz (the Persian "Piroz") = victorious, triumphant, is usually pronounced Fayrúz. The tale is a rechauffé of the King and the Wazir's Wife in The Nights. See vol. v. night dlxxviii.

a woman seer never saw her like. So he turned to those present and asked them, "To whom belongeth yonder house?" when they answered, "To thy servant Fírúz, and that is his spouse." So he went down (and indeed passion had made him drunken as with wine, and he was deeply in love of her), and calling Firuz, said to him, "Take this letter and go with it to such a city and bring me the reply." Firuz took the letter and going to his house, laid it under his head and passed that night; and when the morning morrowed, he farewelled his wife and fared for that city, unknowing what his sovran purposed against him. As for the king, he arose in haste after the husband had set out and repairing to the house of Firuz in disguise, knocked at the entrance. Quoth Firuz's wife, "Who's at the door?" and quoth he, saying, "I am the king, thy husband's master." So she opened and he entered and sat down, saying, "We are come to visit thee." She cried, "I seek refuge[1] from this visitation, for indeed I deem not well of it"; but the king said, "O desire of hearts, I am thy husband's master and methinks thou knowest me not." She replied, "Nay, I know thee, O my lord and master, and I wot thy purpose and whatso thou wantest and that thou art my husband's lord. I understand what thou wishest, and indeed the poet hath forestalled thee in his saying of the verses referring to thy case:—

Now will I leave your water-way untrod; * For many treading that same way I see:
When fall the clustering flies upon the food, * I raise my hand whate'er my hunger be:
And lions eke avoid the water-way * When dogs to lap at fountain-side are free.

Then said she, "O king, comest thou to a watering-place whereat thy dog hath drunk and wilt thou drink thereof?" The king was abashed at her and at her words and fared forth from her but forgot his sandal in the house. Such was his case; but as regards Firuz, when he went forth from his house, he sought the letter, but found it not in pouch; so he returned home. Now his return fell in with the king's going forth and he came upon the sandal in his house, whereat his wit was wildered and he knew that the king had not sent him away save for a device of his own. However, he kept silence and spake not a word, but, taking the letter, went on his mission and accomplished it and returned to the king, who gave him

1 *i.e.*, I seek refuge with Allah — God forfend.

an hundred dinars. So Firuz betook himself to the bazar and bought what beseemeth women of goodly gifts and returning to his wife, saluted her and gave her all he had purchased, and said to her, "Arise and hie thee to thy father's home." Asked she, "Wherefore?" and he answered, "Verily, the king hath been bountiful to me and I would have thee make this public, so thy father may joy in that which he seeth upon thee." She rejoined "With love and gladness," and arising forthwith, betook herself to the house of her father, who rejoiced in her coming and in that which he saw upon her; and she abode with him a month's space, and her husband made no mention of her. Then came her brother to him and said, "O Firuz, an thou wilt not acquaint me with the reason of thine anger against thy wife, come and plead with us before the king." Quoth he, "If ye will have me plead with you, I will e'en plead." So they went to the king and found the Kazi sitting with him; whereupon the damsel's brother began, "Allah assist our lord the Kazi! I let this man on hire a flower-garden, high-walled, with a well well-conditioned and trees fruit-laden; but he beat down its walls and ruined its well and ate its fruits, and now he desireth to return it to me." The Kazi turned to Firuz and asked him, "What sayest thou, O youth?" when he answered, "Indeed, I delivered him the garden in better case than it was before." So the Kazi said to the brother, "Hath he delivered to thee the garden, as he avoucheth?" And the pleader replied, "No; but I desire to question him of the reason of his returning it." Quoth the Kazi, "What sayest thou, O youth?" And quoth Firuz, "I returned it willy nilly, because I entered it one day and saw the trail of the lion; so I feared lest an I entered it again, the lion should devour me. Wherefore that which I did, I did of reverence to him and for fear of him." Now the king was leaning back upon the cushion, and when he heard the young man's words, he comprehended the purport thereof; so he sat up and said, "Return to thy flower-garden in all ease of heart; for, by Allah, never saw I the like of thy garth nor stronger of guard than its walls over its trees!" So Firuz returned to his wife, and the Kazi knew not the truth of the affair, no, nor any of those who were in that assembly, save the king and the husband and the wife's brother.

KING SHAH BAKHT AND HIS WAZIR AL-RAHWAN.[1]

THEY relate that there was once, in days of yore and in bygone ages and times long gone before, a king of the kings of the time, Shah Bakht hight, who had troops and servants and guards in hosts and a Wazir called Al-Rahwán, who was learned, understanding, a loyal counsellor and a cheerful acceptor of the commandments of Almighty Allah, to whom belong Honour and Glory. The king committed to this Minister the affairs of his kingdom and his lieges and spake according to his word, and in this way he abode a long space of time. Now this Wazir had many foes, who envied his position and sought to do him harm, but thereunto found no way and the Lord, in His immemorial fore-knowledge and His fore-ordinance decreed that the king dreamt that the Minister Al-Rahwan gave him a fruit from off a tree and he ate it and died. So he awoke, startled and troubled, and when the Wazir had presented himself before him and had retired and the king was alone with those in whom he trusted, he related to them his vision and they advised him to send for the astrologers and interpreters and commended to him a Sage, whose skill and wisdom they attested. Accordingly the king bade him be brought and entreated him with honour and made him draw near to himself. Now there had been in private intercourse with that Sage a company of the Wazir's enemies, who besought him to slander the Minister to the king and counsel him to do him dead, in view of what they promised him of much wealth; and he made agreement with them on this and acquainted the king that the Minister would slay him within the coming month and bade him hasten to put him to death, else would he surely be killed. Presently, the Wazir entered and the king signed to him to clear the place. So he signed to those who were present to withdraw, and they withdrew; whereupon quoth the king to him, "How deemest thou, O Minister of loyal counsel

1 Bresl Edit., vol. xi. pp 84-318, nights dcccIxxv-dcccexxx. Here again the names are Persian, showing the provenance of the tale; Shah Bakht is = King Luck and Rahwán is a corruption of Rahbán = one who keeps the (right) way, or it may be Ruhbán = the Pious. Mr. W. A. Clouston draws my attention to the fact that this tale is of the Sindibad (Seven Wise Masters) cycle and that he finds remotely allied to it a Siamese collection, entitled Nonthuk Pakaranam in which Princess Kankras, to save the life of her father, relates eighty or ninety tales to the king of Pataliput (Palibothra)

in all manner of contrivance, concerning a vision I have seen in my sleep?" "What is it, O king?" asked the Wazir, and Shah Bakht related to him his dream, adding, "And indeed the Sage interpreted it to me and said to me:—An thou do not the Wazir dead within a month, assuredly he will slay thee. Now to put the like of thee to death, I am loath exceedingly, yet to leave thee on life do I sorely fear. How then dost thou advise me act in this affair?" The Wazir bowed his head earthwards awhile, then raised it and said, "Allah prosper the king! Verily, it availeth not to continue him on life of whom the king is afraid, and my counsel is that thou hasten to put me out of the world." When the king heard his speech and dove into the depths of his meaning, he turned to him and said, "'Tis grievous to me, O Wazir of good rede"; and he told him that the other sages had attested the wit and wisdom of the astrophil. Now hearing these words Al-Rahwan sighed and knew that the king went in fear of him; but he showed him fortitude and said to him, "Allah assain the sovran! My rede is that the king carry out his commandment and his decree be dight, for that needs must death be and 'tis fainer to me that I die oppressed, than that I die an oppressor. But, an the king judge proper to postpone the putting of me to death till the morrow and will pass this night with me and farewell me whenas the morning cometh, the king shall do whatso he willeth." Then he wept till he wetted his gray hairs and the king was moved to ruth for him and granted him that which he craved and vouchsafed him a respite for that night.[1]

The First Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king caused clear his sitting chamber and summoned the Wazir, who presented himself and making his obeisance to the king, kissed ground before him and related to him

THE TALE OF THE MAN OF KHORASAN, HIS SON AND HIS TUTOR.

There was once a man of Khorasan and he had a son, whose moral weal he ardently wished; but the young man sought to be alone and far from the eye of his father, so he might give himself

1 So far this work resembles the Bakhtiyár-námeh, in which the ten Wazirs are eager for the death of the hero who relates tales and instances to the king, warning him against the evils of precipitation.

up to pleasuring and pleasance. Accordingly he sought of his sire leave to make the pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah and to visit the tomb of the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain !). Now between them and Meccah was a journey of five hundred parasangs ; but his father could not contrary him, for that the Holy Law had made pilgrimage[1] incumbent on him and because of that which he hoped for him of improvement. So he joined unto him a tutor, in whom he trusted, and gave him much money and took leave of him. The son set out with his governor on the holy pilgrimage,[2] and abode on the like wise, spending freely and using not thrift. Also there was in his neighbourhood a poor man, who had a slave-girl of passing beauty and grace, and the youth conceived a desire for her and suffered sore cark and care for the love of her and her loveliness, so that he was like to perish for passion ; and she also loved him with a love yet greater than his love for her. Accordingly, the damsel summoned an old woman who used to visit her and acquainted her with her case, saying, "An I foregather not with him, I shall die." The crone promised her that she would do her best to bring her to her desire ; so she veiled herself and repairing to the young man, saluted him with the salam and acquainted him with the girl's case, saying, "Her master is a greedy wight; so do thou invite him and lure him with lucre, and he will sell thee the hand-maiden." Accordingly, he made a banquet, and standing in the man's way, invited him[3] and brought him to his house, where they sat down and ate and drank and abode in talk. Presently, the young man said to the other, "I hear thou hast with thee a slave-girl, whom thou desirest to sell" ; but he said, "By Allah, O my lord, I have no mind to sell her!" Quoth the youth, "I have heard that she cost thee a thousand dinars, and I will give thee six hundred over and above that sum" ; and quoth the other, "I sell her to thee at that price." So they fetched notaries who wrote out the contract of sale, and the young man weighed to the girl's master half the purchase money, saying, "Let her be with thee till I complete to thee the rest of the price

1 One pilgrimage (Hajjat al-Islam) is commanded to all Moslems. For its conditions see The Nights, vol. iv. night cccxlii.

2 Arab. "Hajj al-Shárif." For the expenses of the process see my Pilgrimage, iii. 12. As in all "Holy Places," from Rome to Benares, the sinner in search of salvation is hopelessly taken in and fleeced by the "sons of the sacred cities."

3 Here a stranger invites a guest who at once accepts the invitation; such is the freedom between Moslems at Meccah and Al-Madinah, especially during pilgrimage-time.

and take my hand-maid." The owner consented to this and took of him a written bond for the rest of the money, and the girl abode with her master, on deposit.[1] As for the youth, he gave his governor a thousand dirhams and sent him to his sire, to fetch money from him, so he might pay the rest of the hand-maid's price, saying to him, "Be not long away." But the tutor said in his mind, "How shall I fare to his father and say to him, Thy son hath wasted thy money and made love with it[2]? With what eyes shall I look on him and, indeed, I am he in whom he confided and to whom he hath entrusted his son? Verily, this were ill rede. Nay, I will fare on with this pilgrimage-caravan[3] in despite of my fool of a youth; and when he is weary of waiting, he will demand back his money and return to his father, and I shall be quit of travail and trouble." So he went on with the pilgrimage-caravan[4] and took up his abode there.[5] Meanwhile, the youth tarried expecting his tutor's return, but he returned not; wherefore concern and chagrin grew upon him because of his mistress, and his yearning for her redoubled and he was like to kill himself. She became aware of this and sent him a messenger, bidding him visit her. Accordingly he went to her, and she questioned him of the case; when he told her what was to do of the matter of his tutor, and she said to him, "With me is longing the like of that which is with thee, and I doubt me thy messenger hath perished or thy father hath slain him; but I will give thee all my jewellery and my dresses, and do thou sell them and weigh out the rest of my price, and we will go, I and thou, to thy sire." So she handed to him all she had and he sold it and paid the rest of her price; after which there remained to him for spending-money an hundred dirhams. These he spent and lay that night with the damsel in all delight of life, and his sprite was like to fly for joy: but when he arose in the morning, he sat weeping and the damsel said to him, "What causeth thee to weep?" Said he, "I know not an my father be dead, and he hath none other heir

1 *i.e.*, the master could no longer use her as his wife.

2 *i.e.*, wantoned it away.

3 Here "Al-Hajj" = the company of pilgrims, a common use of the term.

4 The text says, "He went on with the caravan to the Pilgrimage," probably a clerical error. "Hajj" is never applied to the Visitation (Ziyárah) at Al-Madinah.

5 Arab. "Jáwar," that is, he became a mujáwir, one who lives in or near a collegiate mosque. The Egyptian proverb says, "He pilgrimaged: quoth one, Yes, and for his villainy lives (yujáwir) at Meccah," meaning that he found no other place bad enough for him.

save myself; but how shall I get to him, seeing I own not a dirham?" Quoth she, "I have a bangle; sell it and buy seed-pearls with the price: then round them and fashion them into great unions[1] and thereby thou shalt gain much money, with the which we may find our way to thy country." So he took the bangle and repairing to a goldsmith, said to him, "Break up this bracelet and sell it"; but he said, "The king seeketh a perfect bracelet: I will go to him and bring thee its price." Presently he bore the bangle to the Sultan and it pleased him greatly by reason of its goodly workmanship. Then he called an old woman, who was in his palace, and said to her, "Needs must I have the mistress of this bracelet though but for a single night, or I shall die"; and the old woman replied, "I will bring her to thee." Thereupon she donned a devotee's dress and betaking herself to the goldsmith, said to him, "To whom belongeth the bangle which is now with the king?" and said he, "It belongeth to a stranger, who hath bought him a slave-girl from this city and lodgeth with her in such a place." Upon this the old woman repaired to the young man's house and knocked at the door. The damsel opened to her and seeing her clad in devotee's garb,[2] saluted her with the salam and asked her saying, "Haply thou hast some need of us?" Answered the old woman, "Yes, I desire a private place, where I can perform the Wuzu-ablution;" and quoth the girl, "Enter." So she entered and did her requirement and made the ablution and prayed[3]: then she brought out a rosary and began to tell her beads thereon, and the damsel said to her "Whence comest thou, O pilgrimess[4]?" Said she, "From visiting the Idol of the Absent in such a church.[5] There standeth up no woman before him,[6] who hath a distant friend and discloseth to him her desire, but he acquainteth her with her case and giveth her news of her absent one." Said the damsel, "O pilgrimess, we have an absent one, and my lord's earth

1 I have often heard of this mysterious art in the East, also of similarly making rubies and branch-coral of the largest size; but, despite all my endeavours, I never was allowed to witness the operation. It was the same with alchemy, which, however, I found very useful to the "smasher." See my History of Sindh, chapt. vii.

2 Elsewhere in The Nights specified as white woollen robes.

3 Whilst she was praying the girl could not address her; but the use of the rosary is a kind of "parergon."

4 Arab. "Yá Hájjah" (in Egypt pronounced "Hággeh"), a polite address to an elderly woman, who is thus supposed to have "finished her faith."

5 Arab. "Kanisah" (from Kans = sweeping) a pagan temple, a Jewish synagogue, and especially a Christian church.

6 *i.e.*, standeth in prayer or supplication.

cleaveth to him and I desire to go question the Idol of him." Quoth the crone, "Do thou wait till to-morrow and ask leave of thy spouse, and I will come to thee and fare with thee in weal and welfare." Then she went away, and when the girl's master came, she sought his permission to go with the old trot, and he gave her leave. So the beldame came and took her and carried her to the king's door she unknowing whither she went. The damsel entered with her and beheld a goodly house and decorated apartments which were no idol's chamber. Then came the king and seeing her beauty and loveliness, went up to her to buss her; whereupon she fell down in a fainting fit and struck out with her hands and feet.[1] When he saw this, he held aloof from her in ruth and left her; but the matter was grievous to her and she refused meat and drink, and as often as the king drew near to her, she fled from him in fear, so he swore by Allah that he would not approach her save with her consent and fell to presenting her with ornaments and raiment; but her aversion to him only increased. Meanwhile, the youth her master abode expecting her; but she returned not and his heart already tasted the bitter draught of separation; so he went forth at hap-hazard, distracted and knowing not what he should do, and began strewing dust upon his head and crying out, "The old woman hath taken her and gone away!" The little boys followed him with stones and pelted him, crying, "A madman! A madman!" Presently, the king's Chamberlain, who was a personage of years and worth, met him, and when he saw this youth, he forbade the boys and drave them away from him, after which he accosted him and asked him of his affair. So he told him his tale and the Chamberlain said to him, "Fear not! I will deliver thy slave-girl for thee; so calm thy concern." And he went on to speak him fair and comfort him, till he had firm reliance on his word. Then he carried him to his home and stripping him of his clothes, clad him in rags; after which he called an old woman, who was his housekeeper,[2] and said to her, "Take this youth and bind on his neck yon iron chain and go round about with him in all the great thoroughfares of the city, and when thou hast done this, go up with him to the palace of the king." And he said to the youth, "In whatsoever stead

1 *i.e.*, fell into hysterics, a very common complaint amongst the highly nervous and excitable races of the East.

2 Arab "Kahramánah," a word which has often occurred in divers senses, nurse, duenna, chamberwoman, stewardess, armed woman defending the Harem, etc.

thou seest the damsel, speak not a syllable, but acquaint me with her place and thou shalt owe her deliverance to none save to me." The youth thanked him and went with the old woman in such fashion as the Chamberlain bade him. She fared on with him till they entered the city, and walked all about it; after which she went up to the palace of the king and fell to saying, "O fortune's favourites, look on a youth whom the devils take twice in the day, and pray to be preserved from such affliction!" And she ceased not to go round with him till she came to the eastern wing[1] of the palace, whereupon the slave-girls hurried out to look upon him, and when they saw him they were amazed at his beauty and loveliness and wept for him. Then they informed the damsel, who came forth and considered him and knew him not; but he knew her; so he drooped his head and shed tears. She was moved to pity for him and gave him somewhat and went back to her place, whilst the youth returned with the housekeeper to the Chamberlain and told him that she was in the king's mansion, whereat he was chagrined and said, "By Allah, I will assuredly devise a device for her and deliver her!" Whereupon the youth kissed his hands and feet. Then he turned to the old woman and bade her change her habit and her semblance. Now this ancient dame was sweet of speech and winsome of wit; so he gave her costly and delicious ottars and said to her, "Get thee to the king's slave-girls and sell them these essences and win thy way to the damsel and ask her if she desire her master or not." So the old woman went out and making her way to the palace, went in to the hand-maid and drew near her and recited these couplets :—

Allah preserve our Union-days and their delights. * Ah me! How sweet was life! how joys were ever new!
May he not be who cursed us twain with parting day; * How many a bone he brake, how many a life he slew!
He shed my faultless tear-floods and my sinless blood; * And beggaring me of love himself no richer grew.

When the damsel heard the old woman's verses she wept till her clothes were drenched and drew near the speaker, who asked her, "Knowest thou Such-an-one?" And she wept and answered, "He is my lord. Whence knowest thou him?" Rejoined the old woman, "O my lady, sawest thou not the madman who came hither yesterday with the old woman? He was thy lord," presently adding, "But this is no time for talk.

1 Which is supposed to contain the Harem.

When 'tis night, get thee to the top of the palace and wait on the terrace till thy lord come to thee and compass thy deliverance." Then she gave her what she would of perfumes and returning to the Chamberlain, acquainted him with whatso had passed, and he told the youth. Now as soon as it was evening, the Chamberlain bade bring two hackneys and great store of water and provaunt and a riding-camel and a fellow to show them the way. These he ambushed without the town, whilst he and the young man, taking with them a long rope, made fast to a staple, went and stood below the palace. Whenas they came thither, they looked and behold, the damsel was standing on the terrace-roof, so they threw her the rope and the staple, which she made fast, and tucking up her sleeves above her wrists, slid down and landed with them. They carried her without the town, where they mounted, she and her lord, and fared on, with the guide in front,[1] directing them on the way, and they ceased not faring night and day till they entered his father's house. The young man greeted his sire, who was gladdened in him, and to whom he related all that had befallen him, whereupon he rejoiced in his safety. As for the tutor, he wasted whatso was with him and returned to the city, where he saw the youth and excused himself. Then he questioned him of what had betided him and he told him, whereat he admired and returned to companionship with him; but the youth ceased to have regard for him and gave him nor solde nor ration as was his wont, neither discovered to him aught of his secrets. When the tutor saw that there was no profit from him he returned to the king, the ravisher of the slave-girl, and recounted to him what the Chamberlain had done and counselled him to slay that official and egged him on to recover the damsel, promising to give his friend a poison-draught and return. Accordingly the king sent for the Chamberlain and chid him for the deed he had done; whereat the king's servants incontinently fell upon the Chamberlain and put him to death. Meanwhile the tutor returned to the youth, who asked him of his absence, and he told him that he had been in the city of the king who had taken the slave-girl. When the youth heard this, he misdoubted of his governor and never again trusted him in anything but was

1 Especially mentioned because the guide very often follows his charges, especially when he intends to play them an ugly trick I had an unpleasant adventure of the kind in Somaliland; but having the fear of the "Aborigines' Protection Society" before my eyes, refrained from doing more than hinting at it.

always on his guard against him. Then the tutor without stay or delay caused prepare great store of sweetmeats and put in them deadly poison and presented them to the youth, who, when he saw those sweetmeats, said to himself, "This is an extraordinary thing of the tutor! Needs must there be in this sweetmeat some mischief, and I will make proof of his confectionery upon himself." Accordingly he got ready food and set amongst it a portion of the sweetmeat, and inviting the governor to his house placed the provaunt before him. He ate, and amongst the rest which they brought him, the poisoned sweetmeat; so while in the act of eating he died; whereby the youth knew that this was a plot against himself and said, "Whoso seeketh his fortune by his own force[1] attaineth a failure." "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this, O king of the age, stranger than the story of the Druggist and his Wife and the Singer." When King Shah Bakht heard the tale of Al-Rahwan he gave him leave to withdraw to his own house and he tarried there the rest of the night and the next day till eventide evened.

The Second Night of the Month.

WHEN the evening evened, the king sat private in his sitting-chamber and his mind was occupied with the story of the Singer and the Druggist. So he called the Wazir and bade him tell the tale. Answered he, "I will well. They recount, O my lord, the following

TALE OF THE SINGER AND THE DRUGGIST.

There was once in the city of Hamadán[2] a young man of seemly semblance and skilled in singing to the lute; wherefore he was well seen of the citizens. He went forth one day of his home with intent to travel, and gave not over journeying till his travel brought him to a town and a goodly. Now he had with him a lute and its appurtenance,[3] so he entered and went round about the streets till he happened upon a druggist who, when he espied him, called to him. So he went up to him and he bade him sit down; accordingly, the youth sat down by his side, and

1 *i. e.*, otherwise than according to ordinance of Allah.
2 A well-known city of Irák 'Ajamí (or Persian)
3 *i. e.*, spare pegs and strings, plectra, thumb-guards, etc.

the druggist questioned him of his case. The singer told him what was in his mind, and the pharmacist took him up into his shop and bought him food and fed him. Then said he to him, "Rise and take up thy lute and beg about the streets, and whenas thou smellest the reek of wine, break in upon the drinkers and say to them, I am a singer. They will laugh and cry, Come in to us. And when thou singest, the folk will know thee and speak one to other of thee; so shalt thou become known about town, and thou shalt better thy business" He went round about, as the druggist bade him, till the sun waxed hot, but found none drinking. Then he entered a lane, that he might take rest, and seeing there a handsome house and a lofty, stood in its shade and fell to observing the excellence of its edification. Now while he was thus engaged, behold, a casement opened and there appeared thereat a face, as it were the moon. Quoth the owner of the face, "What aileth thee to stand there? Dost thou want aught?" And quoth he, "I am a stranger," and acquainted her with his adventure; whereupon asked she, "What sayest thou to meat and drink and the enjoyment of a fair face and getting thee spending-money?" And he answered, "O mistress mine, this is my desire whereof I am going about in quest!" So she opened the door to him and brought him in: then she seated him at the upper end of the room and served him with food. He ate and drank and lay with her. This ended, she sat down in his lap and they toyed and laughed and exchanged kisses till the day was half done, when her husband came home and she had no recourse but to hide the singer in a mat,[1] in which she rolled him up. The husband entered and seeing the battle-place[2] disordered and smelling the reek of liquor questioned her of this. Quoth she, "I had with me a bosom friend of mine and I conjured her to crack a cup with me; and so we drank a jar full, I and she, and but now, before thy coming in, she fared forth." Her husband deemed her words true and went away to his shop, he being none other than the singer's friend the druggist, who had invited him and fed him; whereupon the lover came forth and he and the lady returned to their pleasant pastime and abode on this wise till evening, when she gave him money and said to him, "To-morrow in the forenoon come hither to me." He replied, "Yes," and departed; and at nightfall he went to the Hammam-bath. On the morrow, he betook

1 Arab. "Hasir," the fine matting used for sleeping on during the hot season in Egypt and Syria.

2 *i.e.*, the bed.

himself to the shop of his friend the druggist, who welcomed him as soon as he saw him, and questioned him of his case and how he had fared that day. Quoth the singer, "Allah requite thee with welfare, O my brother, for indeed thou hast directed me to a restful life!" Then he acquainted him with his adventure and told him the tale of the woman, till he came to the mention of her husband, when he said, "And at midday came the horned cuckold,[1] her husband, and knocked at the door. So she wrapped me in the mat, and when he had wended his ways I came forth and we returned to our pleasant play." This was grievous to the druggist, and he repented of having taught him how he should do and suspected his wife. Accordingly he asked the singer, "And what said she to thee at thy going away?" and the other answered, "She said, Come back to me on the morrow. So, behold, I am off to her and I came not hither but that I might acquaint thee with this, lest thy thoughts be preoccupied with me." Then he farewelled him, and walked out. As soon as the druggist was assured that he had reached the house, he cast the net[2] over his shop and made for his home, in some suspicion of his wife, and knocked at the door. Now the singer had entered and the druggist's wife said to him, "Up with thee and enter this chest." Accordingly he entered it and she shut it down on him and opened to her husband, who came in all distraught, and searched the house but found none and overlooked the chest. Hereat he said in his mind "The house[3] is one which favoureth my house and the woman is one who favoureth my wife" and returned to his shop; whereupon the singer came forth of the chest, and falling upon the druggist's wife, had his wicked will of her. Then they ate and drank and kissed and clipped necks, and in this way they abode till the evening, when she gave him money, and made him promise to come to her on the morrow. So he left her and slept his night, and on the morrow he returned to the shop of his friend the druggist and saluted him. The other welcomed him and questioned him of his case; whereat he told his tale till he ended

1 This word, which undoubtedly derives from cuculus, cogul, cocu, a cuckoo, has taken a queer twist, nor can I explain how its present meaning arose from a she-bird which lays her egg in a strange nest. Wittol, on the other hand, from Witan to know, is rightly applied to one whom La Fontaine calls "cocu et content," the Arab Dayyús.

2 Arab "Shabakah," here a net like a fisherman's, which is hung over the hole in the wall called a shop, during the temporary absence of the shopkeeper See my Pilgrimage, i. 100.

3 *i.e.*, of which the singer speaks.

with the mention of the woman's husband, when he said, "Then came the horned cuckold, her mate, and she stowed me away in the chest and shut down the lid upon me, whilst her addlepated pander[1] of a husband went about the house, top and bottom; and when he had gone his way, we returned to our pleasant pastime." With this, the druggist was assured that the house was his house and the wife his wife, and quoth he, "Now what wilt thou do to-day?" Quoth the singer, "I shall return to her and I came not[2] save to thank thee for thy dealing with me." Then he went away, whilst the fire was loosed in the heart of the druggist, and he shut his shop and returning to his house, rapped at the door. Said the singer, "Let me jump into the chest, for he saw me not yesterday"; but said she, "No! wrap thyself up in the mat." So he wrapped himself up and stood in a corner of the room, whilst the druggist entered and went no whither else save to the chest, but found naught inside. Then he walked round about the house and searched it, top and bottom, but came upon nothing and no one, and abode between belief and disbelief, and said to himself, "Haply, I suspect my wife of what is not in her." So he was certified of her innocence and going forth content, returned to his shop, whereupon out came the singer and they resumed their former little game, as was their wont, till eventide when she gave him one of her husband's shirts and he took it and going away, nighted in his own lodging. Next morning he repaired to the druggist, who saluted him with the salam and came to meet him and rejoiced in him and smiled in his face, deeming his wife innocent. Then he questioned him of his case on yesterday and he told him how he had fared, saying, "O my brother, when the cornute knocked at the door, I would have jumped into the chest; but his wife forbade me and rolled me up in the mat. The man entered and thought of nothing save the chest; so he brake it open and woned like one jinn-mad, going up and coming down. Then he went about his business and I came out and we abode on our accustomed case till eventide, when she gave me this shirt of her husband's; and behold, I am now off to her." When the druggist heard the singer's words, he was assured of the adventure and knew that the calamity, all of it, was in his own house and that the wife was his wife; and

1 Arab. "Mu'arris": in vol. i night xxxiii. I derived the word from 'Ars marriage, like the Germ. Kupplerin. This was a mere mistake; the root is 'Ars (with a Sád not a Sín) and means a pimp who shows off or displays his wares.

2 I must again warn the reader that the negative, which to us appears unnecessary, is emphatic in Arabic.

he considered the shirt, whereupon he redoubled in assuredness and said to the singer, "Art thou now going to her?" Said he, "Yes, O my brother," and taking leave of him, went away; whereupon the druggist started up, as he were stark mad, and dismantled his shop.[1] Whilst he was thus doing, the singer won to the house, and presently up came the druggist and knocked at the door. The lover would have wrapped himself up in the mat, but she forbade him and said "Get thee down to the ground floor of the house and enter the oven-jar[2] and close the cover upon thyself." So he did her bidding and she went down to her husband and opened the door to him, whereupon he came in and went round the house, but found no one and overlooked the oven-jar. Then he stood musing and sware that he would not again go forth of the house till the morrow. As for the singer, when his stay in the oven-jar grew longsome upon him, he came forth therefrom, thinking that her husband had gone away; and he went up to the terrace-roof and looking down, beheld his friend the druggist: whereat he was sore concerned and said in himself, "Alas, the disgrace, ah! This is my friend the druggist, who of me was fain and dealt me fair and I have paid him with foul." He feared to return to the druggist; so he stepped down and opened the first door and would have gone out at a venture, unseen of the husband; but, when he came to the outer door, he found it locked and saw not the key. Hereat he returned to the terrace and began dropping from roof to roof till the people of the house heard him and hastened to fall upon him, deeming him a thief. Now that house belonged to a Persian man; so they laid hands on him and the house-master fell to beating him, saying to him, "Thou art a thief." He replied, "No I am not a thief, but a singing-man, a stranger who, hearing your voices, came to sing to you." When the folk heard his words, they talked of letting him go; but the Persian said, "O folk, let not his speech cozen you. This one is none other than a thief who knoweth how to sing, and when he cometh upon the like of us, he is a singer." Said they, "O our lord, this man is a stranger, and needs we must release him." Quoth he, "By Allah, my heart heaveth at this fellow! Let me kill him with beating"; but quoth they, "Thou mayst no ways do that." So they delivered the singer from the Persian, the master of the house, and seated him amongst them, whereupon he began

1 *i.e.*, by removing the goods from the "but" to the "ben." Pilgrimage, i. 99.

2 Arab. "Tannúr," here the large earthern jar with a cover of the same material, round which the fire is built.

singing to them and they rejoiced in him. Now the Persian had a Mameluke, as he were the full moon, and he arose and went out, and the singer followed him and wept before him, kissing his hands and feet. The Mameluke took compassion on him and said to him, "When the night cometh and my master entereth the Harim and the folk fare away, I will company with thee." Then the singer returned and sat with the cup-companions, and the Persian rose and went out with the Mameluke by his side. Now the singer knew the place which the Mameluke occupied at the first of the night; but it chanced that the youth rose from his stead and the waxen taper went out. The Persian, who was drunk, fell over on his face, and the singer, supposing him to be the Mameluke, said, "By Allah, 'tis good!" and fell over him. Thereupon the Persian started up, crying out and laying hands on the singer, pinioned him and beat him a grievous beating, after which he bound him to a tree that stood in the house-court. Now there was in the house a beautiful singing-girl and when she saw the singer tight pinioned and tied to the tree, she waited till the Persian lay down on his couch, when she arose and going up to the singer, fell to condoling with him over what had betided him and making eyes at him. Then said she to him, "Do with me as I wish and I will loose thy pinion-bonds, lest he return and beat thee again; for he purposeth thee an ill purpose." Quoth he, "Loose me and I will do it"; but quoth she, "I fear that, an I loose thee, thou wilt not do it. But when I have done, I will loose thee." Now there was in the house a fighting-ram, which the Persian had trained to butting,[1] and when he saw what the woman was doing, he thought she wished to do battle with him; so he broke his halter and running at her, butted her and split her skull. She fell on her back and shrieked; whereupon the Persian started up hastily from sleep and seeing the singing-girl on her back, and the singer, cried to him, "O accursed, doth not what thou hast erewhile done suffice thee?" Then he beat him a shrewd beating and opening the door, thrust him out in the middle of the night. He lay the rest of the dark hours in one of the ruins, and when he arose in the morning, he said, "None is in fault! I, for one, sought my own good, and he is no fool who seeketh good for himself; and the

1 Alluding to the fighting rams which are described by every Anglo-Indian traveller. They strike with great force, amply sufficient to crush the clumsy hand which happens to be caught between the two foreheads. The animals are sometimes used for Fál or consulting futurity: the name of a friend is given to one and that of a foe to the other; and the result of the fight suggests victory or defeat for the men.

druggist's wife also sought good for herself; but Predestination overcometh Precaution and for me there remaineth no tarrying in this town." So he went forth from the place. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this story, strange though it be, stranger than that of the King and his Son and that which betided them of wonders and rare marvels." When the king heard this story, he deemed it pretty and pleasant and said, "This tale is near unto that which I know and 'tis my rede I should do well to have patience and hasten not to slay my Minister, so I may get of him the profitable story of the King and his Son." Then he gave the Wazir leave to go away to his own house; so he thanked him and tarried in his home all that day.

The Third Night of the Month.

WHEN it was supper-time the king sought the sitting-chamber; and, summoning the Wazir, sought of him the story he had promised him; and the Minister said, "They tell, O king,

THE TALE OF THE KING WHO KENNED THE QUINTESSENCE[1] *OF THINGS.*"

There came to a king of the kings, in his old age, a son, who grew up comely, quick-witted, clever: and, when he reached years of discretion and became a young man, his father said to him, "Take this realm and rule it in lieu of me, for I desire to flee from the sin of sovranty[2] to Allah the Most High and don the woollen dress and devote all my time to devotion." Quoth the Prince, "And I am another who desireth to take refuge with the Almighty." So the king said, "Arise, let us flee forth and make for the mountains and there worship in shame before God the Most Great." Accordingly, the twain gat them gear of wool and clothing themselves therewith, fared forth and wandered in the wolds and wastes; but, when some days had passed over them, both became weak for hunger and repented them of that they had done whenas penitence profited them not, and the Prince complained to his father of weariness and hunger. Cried the

1 Arab. "Jauhar" = the jewel, the essential nature of a substance. Compare M. Alcofribas' "Abstraction of the Quintessence."

2 In parts of the Moslem world Al-Jabr = the tyranny, is the equivalent of what we call "civil law," as opposed to Al-Shari'ah, or Holy Law, the religious code; Diwan Al-Jabr (Civil Court) being the contrary of the Mahkamah or Kazi's tribunal. See "First Footsteps in East Africa," p. 126.

king, "Dear my son, I did with thee that which behoved me,[1] but thou wouldst not hearken to me, and now there is no means of returning to thy former estate, for that another hath taken the kingdom and defendeth it from all foes: but indeed I will counsel thee of somewhat, wherein do thou pleasure me by compliance." The Prince asked, "What is it?" and his father answered, "Take me and go with me to the market-street and sell me and receive my price and do with it whatso thou willest, and I shall become the property of one who shall provide for my wants." The Prince enquired, "Who will buy thee of me, seeing thou art a very old man? Nay, do thou rather sell me, inasmuch as the demand for me will be more." But the king replied, "An thou wert king, thou wouldest require service of me." Accordingly the youth obeyed his father's bidding and taking him, carried him to the slave-dealer and said, "Sell me this old man." Said the dealer, "Who will buy this wight, and he a son of eighty years[2]?" Then quoth he to the king, "In what crafts art thou cunning?" and quote he, "I ken the quintessence of jewels and I ken the quintessence of horses and I ken the quintessence of men; brief, I ken the quintessence of all things." So the slave-dealer took him and went about, offering him for sale to the folk; but none would buy. Presently, up came the Chef of the Sultan's kitchen and asked, "What is this man?" and the dealer answered, "This be a Mameluke for sale." The kitchener marvelled at this and bought the king, after questioning him of what he could do, for ten thousand dirhams. Then he weighed out the money and carried him to his house, but dared not employ him in aught of service; so he appointed him an allowance, a modicum sufficient for his maintenance, and repented him of having bought him, saying, "What shall I do with the like of this wight?" Presently, the king of the city was minded to go forth to his garden,[3] a-pleasuring, and bade the cook precede him and appoint in his stead one who should dress the royal meat, so that, when he returned, he might find the meal ready. The Chef fell to thinking of whom he should appoint and was perplexed concerning his affair. As he was thus, the Shaykh came to him, and seeing him distraught as to how he should do, said to him, "Tell me what is in thy mind; haply I may bring thee relief." So he acquainted him with the king's wishes and he said, "Have no care for this, but leave me

1 *i.e.*, in offering thee the kingship.
2 *i.e.*, "a man of fourscore."
3 *i.e.*, outside the city.

one of the serving-men and do thou go companying thy lord in peace and surety, for I will suffice thee of this." Hereat the cook departed with the king, after he had brought the old man what he needed and left him a man of the guards; and when he was gone, the Shaykh bade the trooper wash the kitchen-battery and made ready food exceedingly fine. When the king returned he set the meat before him, and he tasted dishes whose like he had never savoured; whereat he was startled and asked who had dressed it. Accordingly they acquainted him with the Shaykh's case and he summoned him to his presence and asking him anent the mystery, increased his allowance of rations[1]; moreover, he bade that they should cook together, he and the kitchener, and the old man obeyed his bidding. Some time after this, there came two merchants to the king with two pearls of price and each of them declared that his pearl was worth a thousand dinars, but the folk was incompetent to value them. Then said the cook, "Allah prosper the king! Verily, the Shaykh whom I bought affirmed that he knew the quintessence of jewels and that he was skilled in cookery. We have tried him in his cuisine, and have found him the most knowing of men; and now, if we send after him and prove him on jewels, his second claim will be made manifest to us, whether true or false." So the king bade fetch the Shaykh and he came and stood before the Sultan, who showed him the two pearls. Quoth he, "Now for this one, 'tis worth a thousand dinars"; and quoth the king, "So saith its owner." "But for this other," continued the old man, "'tis worth only five hundred." The people laughed and admired his saying, and the merchant who owned the second pearl asked him, "How can this, which is bigger of bulk and worthier for water and righter of rondure, be less of value than that?" and the old man answered, "I have said what is with me.[2]" Then quoth the king to him, "Indeed, the outer semblance thereof is like that of the other pearl; why then is it worth but the half of its price?" and quoth the old man, "Yes, but its inward is corrupt." Asked the merchant, "Hath a pearl then an inward and an outward?" and the Shaykh answered, "Yea! In its interior is a teredo, a boring worm; but the other pearl is sound and secure against breakage." The merchant continued, "Give us approof of this thy knowledge and confirm to us the truth of thy saying"; and the old man rejoined, "We will break it: an I prove a liar, here is my head, and if I speak sooth, thou wilt have lost thy

1 See the conclusion of the story.
2 *i.e.*, I have said my say.

pearl"; and the merchant said, "I agree to that." So they brake the pearl and it was even as the old man had declared, to wit, in the heart of it was a boring worm. The king marvelled at what he saw and questioned him of how he came by the knowledge of this. The Shaykh replied, "O king, this kind of jewel is engendered in the belly of a creature called the oyster[1] and its origin is a drop of rain and it resisteth the touch and groweth not warm whilst hent in hand[2]: so, when its outer coat became tepid to my touch, I knew that it harboured some living thing, for that things of life thrive not save in heat." Therefore the king said to the cook, "Increase his allowance"; and the Chef appointed to him fresh rations. Now some time after this, two merchants presented themselves to the king with two horses, and one said, "I ask a thousand ducats for my horse," and the other, "I seek five thousand ducats for mine." Quoth the cook, "We are now familiar with the old man's just judgment; what deemeth the king of fetching him?" So the king bade fetch him, and when he saw the two horses,[3] he said, "This is worth a thousand and that two thousand ducats." Quoth the folk, "This horse thou misjudgest is evidently a thoroughbred and he is younger and faster and compacter of limb and finer of head and clearer of colour and skin than the other"; presently adding, "What assurance hast thou of the sooth of thy saying?" And the old man said, "This ye state is true, all true; but his sire is old and this other is the son of a young horse. Now, when the son of an old horse standeth still a-breathing, his breath returneth not to him and his rider falleth into the hand of him who followeth after him; but the son of a young horse, an thou put him to speed and after making him run, alight from him, thou wilt find him, by reason of his robustness, untired." Quoth the merchant, "'Tis even as the Shaykh avoucheth and he is an excellent judge." And the king said, "Increase his allowance." But the Shaykh stood still and did not go away; so the king asked him, "Why dost thou not go about thy business?" and he answered, "My business is with the king." Said the king, "Name what thou wouldest have," and the other replied, "I would have thee

1 Arab. "Al-Mutabattil," usually = one who forsakes the world. The Katarát al-Naysán or rain-drops in the month Naysán (April) produce pearls when falling into the oyster-shells and poison in the serpent's mouth The allusions to them are innumerable in Persian poetry, and the idea gives rise to a host of moralities more or less insipid.

2 This is the general idea concerning the diamond in all countries where the gem is dug, but I never heard it of the pearl.

3 Arab. "Faras," properly a mare; but the writer begins by using the feminine, and then employs the masculine. It is an abominable text.

question me of the quintessence of men, even as thou hast questioned me of the quintessence of horses." Quoth the king, "We have no occasion to question thee thereof"; but quoth the old man, "I have occasion to acquaint thee." "Say what thou wilt," rejoined the king, and the Shaykh said, "Verily, the king is the son of a baker." Cried the king, "How and whereby kennest thou that?" and the Shaykh replied, "Know, O king, that I have examined into degrees and dignities[1] and have learned this." Thereupon the king went in to his mother and asked her anent his sire, and she told him that the king her husband was impotent[2]; "So," quoth she, "I feared for the kingdom, lest it pass away after his death; wherefore I yielded my person to a young man, a baker, and conceived by him and bare a man-child[3]; and the kingship came into the hand of my son, that is, thyself." So the king returned to the Shaykh and said to him, "I am indeed the son of a baker; so do thou expound to me the means whereby thou knewest me for this." Quoth the other, "I knew that, hadst thou been the son of a king, thou wouldst have gifted me with things of price, such as rubies and the like; and wert thou the son of a Kazi, thou hadst given largesse of a dirham or two dirhams, and wert thou the son of any of the merchants, thou hadst given me muchel of money. But I saw that thou bestowedst upon me naught save two bannocks of bread and other rations, wherefore I knew thee to be the son of a baker"; and quoth the king, "Thou hast hit the mark." Then he gave him wealth galore and advanced him to high estate. The tale aforesaid pleased King Shah Bakht and he marvelled thereat; but the Wazir said to him, "This story is not stranger than that of the Richard who married his beautiful daughter to the poor Shaykh." The king's mind was occupied with the promised tale and he bade the Wazir withdraw to his lodging; so he went and abode there the rest of the night and the whole of the following day.

The Fourth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat private in his sitting-chamber and bade fetch the Wazir. When he presented himself before him, he said to him, "Tell me the tale of the Richard." The Minister replied, "I will. Hear, O puissant king,

1 Arab "Rutab wa manázil," may also mean "stations and mansions (of the moon and planets)." The double entendre was probably intended.

2 Arab "Za'if," still a popular word, meaning feeble, sick, ailing, but especially, weak in venery

3 See the original of this tale in King Al-Af'á: Al-Mas'udi, chap xlvi.

THE TALE OF THE RICHARD WHO MARRIED HIS BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER TO THE POOR OLD MAN.

A certain rich merchant had a beautiful daughter, who was as the full moon, and when she attained the age of fifteen, her father betook himself to an old man and spreading him a carpet in his sitting-chamber, gave him to eat and conversed and caroused with him. Then said he to him, "I desire to marry thee to my daughter." The other drew back, because of his poverty, and said to him, "I am no husband for her nor am I a match for thee." The merchant was urgent with him, but he repeated his answer to him, saying, "I will not consent to this till thou acquaint me with the cause of thy desire for me. An I find it reasonable, I will fall in with thy wish; and if not, I will not do this ever." Quoth the merchant, "Thou must know that I am a man from the land of China and was in my youth well-favoured and well-to-do. Now I made no account of womankind, one and all, but followed after youths,[1] and one night I saw, in a dream, as it were a balance set up, and hard by it a voice said, 'This is the portion of Such-an-one.' I listened and presently I heard my own name; so I looked and behold, there stood a woman loathly to the uttermost; whereupon I awoke in fear and cried, 'I will never marry, lest haply this fulsome female fall to my lot.' Then I set out for this city with merchandise and the journey was pleasant to me and the sojourn here, so that I took up my abode in the place for a length of time and gat me friends and factors. At last I sold all my stock-in-trade and collected its price and there was left me nothing to occupy me till the folk[2] should depart and I depart with them. One day, I changed my clothes and putting gold into my sleeve, sallied forth to inspect the holes and corners of this city, and as I was wandering about, I saw a handsome house: its seemliness pleased me; so I stood looking on it and beheld a lovely woman at the window. When she saw me, she made haste and descended, whilst I abode confounded. Then I betook myself to a tailor there and questioned him of the house and anent whose it was. Quoth he, "It belongeth to Such-an-one the Notary,[3]

1 He says this without any sense of shame, coolly as Horace or Catullus wrote.

2 *i.e.*, of the caravan with which he came.

3 Arab. "Al-'Adl." In the form of Zú 'adl it = a legal witness, a man of good repute; in Marocco and other parts of the Moslem world 'Adul (plur 'Udúl) signifies an assessor of the Kazi, a notary. Padre Lerchundy (loc. cit. p. 345) renders it *notario*.

God damn him!" I asked, "Is he her sire?" and he answered, "Yes." So I repaired in great hurry to a man, with whom I had been wont to deposit my goods for sale, and told him I desired to gain access to Such-an-one the Notary. Accordingly he assembled his friends and we betook ourselves to the Notary's house. When we came in to him, we saluted him and sat with him, and I said to him, "I come to thee as a suitor, desiring in marriage the hand of thy daughter." He replied, "I have no daughter befitting this man"; and I rejoined, "Allah aid thee! My desire is for thee and not for her.[1]" But he still refused and his friends said to him, "This is an honourable match and a man thine equal, nor is it lawful to thee that thou hinder the young lady of her good luck." Quoth he to them, "She will not suit him!" nevertheless they were instant with him till at last he said, "Verily, my daughter whom ye seek is passing ill-favoured and in her are all blamed qualities of person." And I said, "I accept her, though she be as thou sayest." Then said the folk, "Extolled be Allah! Cease we to talk of a thing settled; so say the word, how much wilt thou have to her marriage-settlement?" Quoth he, "I must have four thousand sequins"; and I said, "To hear is to obey!" Accordingly the affair was concluded and we drew up the contract of marriage and I made the bride-feast; but on the wedding-night I beheld a thing[2] than which never made Allah Almighty aught more fulsome. Methought her folk had devised this freak by way of fun; so I laughed and looked for my mistress, whom I had seen at the window, to make her appearance; but saw her not. When the affair was prolonged and I found none but her, I was like to lose my wits for vexation and fell to beseeching my Lord and humbling myself in supplication before Him that He would deliver me from her. When I arose in the morning, there came the chamberwoman and said to me, "Hast thou need of the bath[3]?" I replied, "No"; and she asked, "Art thou for breakfast?" But I still answered "No"; and on this wise I abode three days, tasting neither meat nor drink. When the young woman my wife saw me in this plight, she said to me, "O man, tell me thy tale, for, by Allah, if I may effect thy deliverance, I will assuredly further thee thereto." I gave ear to her speech and put faith in her sooth and acquainted her with the adventure of the damsel whom I had seen at the

1 *i.e.*, I would marry thy daughter, not only for her own sake, but for alliance with thy family.

2 *i.e.*, the bride's face

3 The Ghusl or complete ablution after consummation.

window and how I had fallen in love with her; whereupon quoth she, "An that girl belong to me, whatso I possess is thine, and if she belong to my sire, I will demand her of him and detain her from him and deliver her to thee." Then she fell to summoning hand-maid after hand-maid and showing them to me, till I saw the damsel whom I loved and said, "This is she." Quoth my wife, "Let not thy heart be troubled, for this is my slave-girl. My father gave her to me and I give her to thee[1]: so comfort thyself and be of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear." Then, when it was night, she brought the girl to me, after she had adorned her and perfumed her, and said to her, "Cross not this thy lord in aught and every that he shall seek of thee." When she came to bed with me, I said in myself, "Verily, this my spouse is more generous than I!" Then I sent away the slave-girl and drew not near her, but arose forthwith and betaking myself to my wife, lay with her and abated her virginity. She conceived by me, and, accomplishing the time of her pregnancy, gave birth to this dear little daughter; in whom I rejoiced, for that she was beautiful exceedingly, and she hath inherited her mother's sound sense and the comeliness of her sire. Indeed, many of the notables of the people have sought her of me in wedlock, but I would not wed her to any, because I saw in a dream, one night, that same balance set up and men and women being therein weighed, one against other, and meseemed I saw thee and her and the voice said to me, 'This is such a man, the portion of such a woman.[2]' Wherefore I knew that Almighty Allah had allotted unto her none other than thyself, and I choose rather to marry thee to her in my lifetime than that thou shouldst marry her after my death." When the poor man heard the merchant's story, he became desirous of wedding his daughter: so he took her to wife and was blessed of her with exceeding love. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this story on any wise stranger or this tale rarer than that of the Sage and his three Sons." When the king heard his Minister's story, he was assured that he would not slay him and said, "I will have patience with him, so I may get of him the story of the Sage and his three Sons." And he bade him depart to his own house.

1 Thus the girl was made lawful to him as a concubine by the "loathly ladye," whose good heart redeemed her ill-looks.

2 Meaning the poor man and his own daughter.

The Fifth Night of the Month.

WHEN the evening evened, the king sat private in his chamber and summoning the Wazir, required of him the promised story. So Al-Rahwan said, "Hear, O king,

THE TALE OF THE SAGE AND HIS THREE SONS.[1]"

There was once a Sage of the sages, who had three sons and sons' sons, and when they waxed many and their seed multiplied, there befell dissension between them. So he assembled them and said to them, "Be ye single-handed against all others and despise not one another lest the folk despise you, and know that your case is the case of the man and the rope which he cut easily, when it was single; then he doubled it and could not cut it: on this wise is division and union.[2] And beware lest ye seek help of others against your own selves or ye will fall into perdition, for by what means soever ye win your wish at his hand, his word will rank higher than your word. Now I have money which I will presently bury in a certain place, that it may be a store for you against the time of your need." Then they left him and dispersed and one of the sons fell to spying upon his sire, so that he saw him hide the hoard outside the city. When he had made an end of burying it, the Sage returned to his house; and as soon as the morning morrowed, his son repaired to the place where he had seen his father bury the treasure and dug and took all the wealth he found and fared forth. When the old man felt that his death[3] drew nigh, he called his sons to him and acquainted them with the place where he had hidden his hoard. As soon as he was dead, they went and dug up the treasure and came upon much wealth, for that the money, which the first son had taken singly and by stealth, was on the surface and he knew not that under it were other monies. So they carried it off and divided it and the first son claimed his share with the rest and added it to that which he had

1 Mr. Payne changes the Arab title to the far more appropriate heading, "Story of the Rich Man and his Wasteful Son." The tale begins with Æsop's fable of the faggot; and concludes with the "Heir of Linne," in the famous Scotch ballad. Mr. Clouston refers also to the Persian Tale of Murchlis (The Sorrowful Wazir); to the Forty Vezirs (23rd Story) to Cinthio and to sundry old English chap-books.

2 Arab. "Tafrik wa'l-jam'a."

3 Arab. "Wafát" pop. used as death, decease, departure; but containing the idea of departing to the mercy of Allah and "paying the debt of nature." It is not so ill-omened a word as Maut = death.

before taken, behind the backs of his father and his brethren. Then he married his cousin, the daughter of his father's brother, and was blessed through her with a male-child, who was the goodliest of the folk of his time. When the boy grew up, his father feared for him poverty and decline of case, so he said to him, "Dear my son, know that during my green days I wronged my brothers in the matter of our father's good, and I see thee in weal; but, an thou come to want, ask not one of them nor any other than they, for I have laid up for thee in yonder chamber a treasure; but do not thou open it until thou come to lack thy daily bread." Then the man died, and his money, which was a great matter, fell to his son. The young man had not patience to wait till he had made an end of that which was with him, but rose and opened the chamber, and behold, it was empty and its walls were whitened, and in its midst was a rope hanging down as for a bucket and ten bricks, one upon other, and a scroll, wherein was written, "There is no help against death; so hang thyself and beg not of any, but kick away the bricks with thy toes, that there may be no escape for thy life, and thou shalt be at rest from the exultation of enemies and enviers and the bitterness of beggary." Now when the youth saw this, he marvelled at that which his father had done and said, "This is an ill treasure." Then he went forth and fell to eating and drinking with the folk, till naught was left him and he passed two days without tasting food, at the end of which time he took a handkerchief and selling it for two dirhams, bought bread and milk with the price and left it on the shelf and went out. Whilst he was gone, a dog came and seized the bread and polluted the milk, and when the young man returned and saw this, he beat his face, and fared forth distraught. Presently, he met a friend, to whom he discovered his case, and the other said to him, "Art thou not ashamed to talk thus? How hast thou wasted all this wealth and now comest telling lies and saying, The dog hath mounted on the shelf, and talking such nonsense?" And he reviled him. So the youth returned to his house, and verily the world had waxed black in his eyes and he cried, "My sire said sooth." Then he opened the chamber door and piling up the bricks under his feet, put the rope about his neck and kicked away the bricks and swung himself off; whereupon the rope gave way with him and he fell to the ground and the ceiling clave asunder and there poured down on him a world of wealth. So he knew that his sire meant to chasten him by means of this, and he invoked Allah's mercy on him. Then he got him again

that which he had sold of lands and houses and what not else and became once more in good case; his friends also returned to him and he entertained them for some time. Then said he to them one day, "There was with us bread and the locusts ate it; so we set in its place a stone, one cubit long and the like broad, and the locusts came and nibbled away the stone, because of the smell of the bread." Quoth one of his friends (and it was he who had given him the lie concerning the dog and the bread and milk), "Marvel not at this, for rats and mice do more than that." Thereupon he said, "Get ye home! In the days of my poverty I was a liar when I told you of the dog's jumping upon the shelf and eating the bread and defiling the milk; and to-day, because I am rich again, I say sooth when I tell you that locusts devoured a stone one cubit long and one cubit broad." They were abashed by his speech and departed from him; and the youth's good prospered and his case was amended. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this stranger or more seld-seen than the story of the Prince who fell in love with the Picture." Quoth the king, Shah Bakht, "Haply, an I hear this story, I shall gain wisdom from it: so I will not hasten in the slaying of this Minister, nor will I do him die before the thirty days have expired." Then he gave him leave to withdraw, and he hied away to his own house.

The Sixth Night of the Month.

When the day absconded; and the evening arrived, the king sat private in his chamber and, summoning the Wazir, who presented himself to him, questioned him of the story. So the Minister said, "Hear, O auspicious king,

THE TALE OF THE PRINCE WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PICTURE."

There was once, in a province of Persia, a king of the kings, who was great of degree, a magnifico, endowed with majesty and girt by soldiery; but he was childless. Towards the end of his life, his Lord vouchsafed him a male-child, and that boy grew up and was comely and learned all manner of lere. He made him a private place, which was a towering palace, edified with coloured marbles and jewels and paintings. When the Prince entered the palace, he saw in its ceiling the picture of a maiden, than whom he had never beheld a fairer of aspect,

and she was surrounded by slave-girls; whereupon he fell down in a fainting fit and became distracted for love of her. Then he sat under the picture till his father came in to him one day, and finding him lean of limb and changed of complexion (which was by reason of his continual looking on that picture), imagined that he was ill and summoned the sages and the leaches, that they might medicine him. He also said to one of his cup-companions, "An thou canst learn what aileth my son, thou shalt have of me the white hand.[1]" Thereupon he went in to him and spake him fair and cajoled him, till he confessed to him that his malady was caused by the picture. Then the courtier returned to the king and told him what ailed his son, whereupon he transported the Prince to another palace and made his former lodging the guest-house; and whoso of the Arabs was entertained therein, him he questioned of the picture, but none could give him tidings thereof, till one day, when there came a wayfarer who seeing the picture, cried, "There is no god but *the* God! My brother painted this portrait." So the king sent for him and questioned him of the affair of the picture and where was he who had painted it. He replied, "O my lord, we are two brothers and one of us went to the land of Hind and fell in love with the Indian king's daughter, and 'tis she who is the original of the portrait. He is wont in every city he entereth to limn her likeness, and I follow him, and longsome is my way." When the king's son heard this, he said, "Needs must I travel to this damsel." So he took all manner rare store and riches galore and journeyed days and nights till he entered the land of Hind, nor did he reach it save after sore travail. Then he asked of the King of Hind who also heard of him, and invited him to the palace. When the Prince came before him, he sought of him his daughter in marriage, and the king said, "Indeed, thou art her match, but there is one objection, to wit, none dare name a male before her because of her hate for men." So he pitched his tents under her palace windows, till one day of the days he gat hold of a girl, one of her favourite slave-girls, and gave her a mint of money. Quoth she to him, "Hast thou a need?" and quoth he, "Yes," and presently acquainted her with his case; when she said, "In very sooth, thou puttest thyself in peril." Then he tarried, flattering himself with false hopes, till all that he had with him was gone and the servants fled from him; whereupon he said to

1 *i. e.*, gifts and presents. See vol iii night ccevii.

one in whom he trusted, "I am minded to repair to my country and fetch what may suffice me and return hither." The other answered, "'Tis for thee to judge." So they set out to return, but the way was long to them and all that the Prince had with him was spent and his company died and their abode but one with him whom he loaded with the little that remained of the victual and they left the rest and fared on. Then there came out a lion and devoured the servant, and the king's son found himself alone. He went on, till his hackney stood still, whereupon he left it and walked till his feet swelled. Presently he came to the land of the Turks,[1] and he naked, hungry, nor having with him aught but somewhat of jewels, bound about his forearm.[2] So he went to the bazar of the goldsmiths and calling one of the brokers gave him the gems. The broker looked and seeing two great rubies, said to him, "Follow me." Accordingly, he followed him, till he brought him to a goldsmith, to whom he gave the jewels, saying, "Buy these." He asked, "Whence hadst thou these?" and the broker answered, "This youth is the owner of them." Then said the goldsmith to the Prince, "Whence hadst thou these rubies?" and he told him all that had befallen him and that he was a king's son. The goldsmith sat astounded at his adventures and bought of him the rubies for a thousand gold pieces. Then said the Prince to him, "Equip thyself to go with me to my country." So he made ready and went with him till the king's son drew near the frontiers of his sire's kingdom, where the people received him with most honourable reception and sent to acquaint his father with his son's arrival. The king came out to meet him and they entreated the goldsmith with respect and regard. The Prince abode awhile with his sire, then set out, he and the goldsmith, to return to the country of the fair one, the daughter of the king of Hind; but there met him highwaymen by the way and he fought the sorest of fights and was slain. The goldsmith buried him and set a mark[3] on his grave and returned to his own country sorrowing

1 *i.e.*, Turcomans; presently called Sistán, for which see vol. ii. night lxxxviii.

2 In my Pilgrimage (i. 38), I took from Mr. Galton's Art of Travel, the idea of opening with a lancet the shoulder or other fleshy part of the body and inserting into it a precious stone. This was immensely derided by not a few including one who, then a young man from the country, presently became a Cabinet Minister. Despite their omniscience, however, the "dodge" is frequently practised.

3 Arab. "'Alam," a pile of stones, a flag or some such landmark The reader will find them described in "The Land of Midian," i. 98, and passim.

and distraught, without telling any of the Prince's violent death. Such was the case of the king's son and the goldsmith; but as regards the Indian king's daughter of whom the Prince went in quest and on whose account he was slain, she had been wont to look out from the topmost terrace of her palace and to gaze on the youth and on his beauty and loveliness; so she said to her slave-girl one day, "Out on thee! What is become of the troops which were camped beside my palace?" The maid replied, "They were the troops of the youth, son to the Persian king, who came to demand thee in wedlock, and wearied himself on thine account, but thou hadst no ruth on him." Cried the Princess, "Woe to thee! Why didst thou not tell me?" And the damsel replied, "I feared thy fury." Then she sought an audience of the king her sire and said to him, "By Allah, I will go in quest of him, even as he came in quest of me; else should I not do him justice as due." So she equipped herself and setting out, traversed the wastes and spent treasures till she came to Sistan, where she called a goldsmith to make her somewhat of ornaments. Now as soon as the goldsmith saw her, he knew her (for that the Prince had talked with him of her and had depictured her to him), so he questioned her of her case, and she acquainted him with her errand, whereupon he buffeted his face and rent his raiment and hove dust on his head and fell a-weeping. Quoth she, "Why dost thou all this?" And he acquainted her with the Prince's case and how he was his comrade and told her that he was dead; whereat she grieved for him and faring on to his father and mother, acquainted them with the case. Thereupon the Prince's father and his uncle and his mother and the lords of the land repaired to his grave and the Princess made mourning over him, crying aloud. She abode by the tomb a whole month; then she caused fetch painters and bade them limn her likeness and the portraiture of the king's son. She also set down in writing their story and that which had befallen them of perils and afflictions, and placed it, together with the pictures, at the head of the grave; and after a little, they departed from the spot. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this stranger, O king of the age, than the story of the Fuller and his Wife and the Trooper and what passed between them." With this the king bade the Minister hie away to his lodging, and when he arose in the morning, he abode his day in his house.

The Seventh Night of the Month.

At eventide the king sat in his wonted seat and sending for the Wazir, said to him, "Tell me the story of the Fuller and his Wife." The Minister replied, "With joy and goodly gree!" So he came forward and said, "Hear, O king of the age,

THE TALE OF THE FULLER AND HIS WIFE AND THE TROOPER.[1]"

There was once in a city of the cities a women fair of favour, who took to lover a trooper wight. Her husband was a fuller, and when he went out to his work, the trooper used to come to her and tarry with her till the time of the fuller's return, when he would go away. After this fashion they abode awhile, till one day the trooper said to his mistress, "I mean to take me a tenement close to thine and dig a Sardáb-souterrain from my house to thy house, and do thou say to thy spouse:—My sister hath been absent with her husband and now they have returned from their travels; and I have made her home herself in my neighbourhood, in order that I may foregather with her at all times. So go thou to her mate the trooper and offer him thy wares for sale, and thou wilt see my sister with him and wilt see that she is I and I am she, without a doubt. Now, Allah, Allah,[2] go to my sister's husband and give ear to that which he shall say to thee." So the trooper bought him a house near hand and made therein a tunnel abutting upon his mistress's house. When he had accomplished his affair, the wife bespoke her husband as her lover had lessoned her and he went out to go to the trooper's house, but turned back by the way, whereupon said she to him, "By Allah, go at once, for my sister asketh of thee." The fool of a fuller went out and made for the trooper's house, whilst his wife forewent him thither by the underground passage, and going up, sat down beside the soldier her leman. Presently, the fuller entered and saluted the trooper and salamed to his own wife and was confounded at the coincidence of the case.[3] Then, doubt

1 Mr. Clouston refers to the "Miles Gloriosus" (Plautus), to "Orlando Innamorato" of Berni (the Daughter of the King of the Distant Isles); to the "Seven Wise Masters" ("The Two Dreams," or "The Crafty Knight of Hungary"); to his Book of Sindibad, p 343 ff.; to Miss Busk's Folk-Lore of Rome, p 399 ("The Grace of the Hunchback"); to Prof. Crane's "Italian Popular Tales," p. 167, and "The Elopement," from Pitrè's Sicilian collection.

2 In sign of impatience; "Look sharp!"

3 *i.e.*, the resemblance of the supposed sister to his wife. This is a mechauffé of Kamar al-Zamán.

befalling him, he returned in haste to his dwelling; but she preceded him by the Sardab to her chamber and donning her wonted clothes, sat awaiting him and said to him, "Did I not bid thee go to my sister and greet her husband and make friends with them?" Quoth he, "I did this, but I misdoubted of my affair, when I saw his wife"; and quoth she, "Did I not tell thee that she favoureth me and I her, and there is naught to distinguish between us but our clothes? Go back to her and make sure." Accordingly, of the heaviness of his wit, he believed her, and returning on his way, went in to the trooper; but she had foregone him, and when he saw her by the side of her lover, he began looking on her and pondering. Then he saluted her and she returned him the salam; and when she spoke he was clean bewildered. So the trooper asked him, "What aileth thee to be thus?" and he answered, "This woman is my wife, and the speech is her speech." Then he rose in haste and, returning to his own house, saw his wife, who had preceded him by the secret passage. So he went back to the trooper's house and found her sitting as before; whereupon he was abashed in her presence and seating himself in the trooper's sitting-chamber, ate and drank with him and became drunken and abode senseless all that day till nightfall, when the trooper arose and, the fuller's hair being long and flowing, he shaved off a portion of it after the fashion of the Turks,[1] clipped the rest short and clapped a Tarbúsh on his head. Then he thrust his feet into walking-boots and girt him with a sword and a girdle and bound about his middle a quiver and a bow and arrows. He also put some silvers in his poke, and thrust into his sleeve letters-patent addressed to the governor of Ispahan, bidding him assign to Rustam Khamártakani a monthly allowance of an hundred dirhams and ten pounds of bread and five pounds of meat and enrol him among the Turks under his commandment. After which he took him up and carrying him forth, left him in one of the mosques. The fuller ceased not sleeping till sunrise, when he awoke and finding himself in this plight, misdoubted of his affair and fancied that he was a Turk and fell a-putting one foot forward and drawing the other back. Then said he in him-

1 This leaving a long lock upon the shaven poll is a very ancient practice: we find it amongst the old Egyptians. For the Shúshah or top-knot of hair, see vol. i. night xxx It is differently worn in the several regions of the Moslem world: the Maroccans of the Rif country grow it not on the pole but on one side of the head. As a rule, however, it is confined to boys, and is shaved off at puberty.

self, "I will go to my dwelling, and if my wife know me, then am I Ahmad the fuller; but an she know me not, I am a Turk." So he betook himself to his house; but when his wife, the cunning witch, saw him, she cried out in his face, saying, "Whither now, O trooper? Wilt thou break into the house of Ahmad the fuller, and he a man of repute, having a brother-in-law a Turk, a man of rank with the Sultan? An thou depart not, I will acquaint my husband and he will requite thee thy deed." When he heard her words, the dregs of his drink wobbled in his brain and he fancied that he was indeed a Turk. So he went out from her and putting his hand to his sleeve, found therein a writ and gave it to one who read it to him. When he heard that which was in the scroll, his mind was confirmed in his phantasy; but he said to himself, "My wife may be seeking to put a cheat on me; so I will go to my fellows the fullers; and if they recognise me not, then am I for sure Khamartakani the Turk." So he betook himself to the fullers and when they espied him afar off, they thought that he was really Khamartakani or one of the Turks, who used to send their washing to them without payment and give them never a stiver. Now they had complained of them aforetime to the Sultan, and he said, "If any one of the Turks come to you, pelt him with stones." Accordingly, when they saw the fuller, they fell upon him with sticks and stones and pelted him; whereupon quoth he, "Verily, I am a Turk and knew it not." Then he took of the dirhams in his pouch and bought him victual for the way and hired a hackney and set out for Ispâhan, leaving his wife to the trooper. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Merchant and the Crone and the King." The Minister's tale pleased King Shah Bakht and his heart clave to the story of the merchant and the old woman; so he bade Al-Rahwan withdraw to his lodging, and he went away to his house and abode there the next day till he should be summoned to the presence.

The Eighth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat private in his chamber and bade fetch the Wazir, who presented himself before him, and the king required of him the story. So the Wazir answered, "With love and gladness. Hear, O king,

THE TALE OF THE MERCHANT, THE CRONE, AND THE KING."

There was once a family of affluence and distinction, in a city of Khorasan, and the townsfolk used to envy them for that which Allah had vouchsafed them. As time went on, their fortune ceased from them and they passed away, till there remained of them but one old woman. When she grew feeble and decrepit, the townsfolk succoured her not with aught, but thrust her forth of the city, saying, "This old woman shall not neighbour with us, for that we do good to her and she requiteth us with evil.[1]" So she took shelter in a ruined place and strangers used to bestow alms upon her, and in this way she tarried a length of time. Now the king of that city had aforetime contended for the kingship with his uncle's son, and the people disliked the king; but Allah Almighty decreed that he should overcome his cousin. However, jealousy of him abode in his heart and he acquainted the Wazir, who hid it not and sent him money. Furthermore, he fell to summoning all strangers who came to the town, man after man, and questioning them of their creed and their goods, and whoso answered him not satisfactory, he took his wealth.[2] Now a certain wealthy man of the Moslems was wayfaring, without knowing aught of this, and it befell that he arrived at that city by night, and coming to the ruin, gave the old woman money and said to her, "No harm upon thee." Whereupon she lifted up her voice and blessed him: so he set down his merchandise by her and abode with her the rest of the night and the next day. Now highwaymen had followed him that they might rob him of his monies, but succeeded not in aught: wherefore he went up to the old woman and kissed her head and exceeded in bounty to her. Then she warned him of that which awaited strangers entering the town and said to him, "I like not this for thee and I fear mischief for thee from these questions that the Wazir hath appointed for addressing the ignorant." And she expounded to him the case according to its conditions: then said she to him, "But have thou no concern: only carry me with thee to thy lodging, and if he question thee of

1 Suspecting her to be a witch because she was old and poor. The same was the case in Europe when these unfortunates were burned during the early part of the last century, and even now the country-folk are often ready to beat or drown them.

2 It is not easy to make sense of this passage especially when the Wazir is spoken of.

aught enigmatical, whilst I am with thee, I will expound the answers to thee." So he carried the crone with him to the city and lodged her in his lodging and entreated her honourably. Presently, the Wazir heard of the merchant's coming; so he sent to him and bade bring him to his house and talked with him awhile of his travels and of whatso had befallen him therein, and the merchant answered his queries. Then said the Minister, "I will put certain critical questions to thee, which an thou answer me, 'twill be well for thee," and the merchant rose and made him no answer. Quoth the Wazir, "What is the weight of the elephant?" The merchant was perplexed and returned him no reply, giving himself up for lost; however, at last he said, "Grant me three days of delay." The Minister granted him the time he sought and he returned to his lodging and related what had passed to the old woman, who said, "When the morrow cometh, go to the Wazir and say to him, Make a ship and launch it on the sea and put in it an elephant, and when it sinketh in the water, mark the place whereunto the water riseth. Then take out the elephant and cast in stones in its place, till the ship sink to that same mark; whereupon do thou take out the stones and weigh them and thou wilt presently know the weight of the elephant.[1]" Accordingly, when he arose in the morning, he went to the Wazir and repeated to him that which the old woman had taught him; whereat the Minister marvelled and said to him, "What sayest thou of a man, who seeth in his house four holes, and in each hole a viper offering to sally out upon him and slay him, and in his house are four sticks, and each hole may not be stopped but with the ends of two sticks? How, then, shall he stop all the holes and deliver himself from the vipers?" When the merchant heard this, there befell him such concern that it garred him forget the first and he said to the Wazir, "Grant me delay, so I may reflect on the reply"; and the Minister cried, "Go out, and bring me the answer, or I will seize thy monies." The merchant fared forth and returned to the old woman who, seeing him changed of complexion, said to him, "What did his hoariness ask thee?" So he acquainted her with the case and she cried, "Fear not; I will bring thee forth of this strait." Quoth he, "Allah requite thee with weal!" Then quoth she, "To-morrow go to him with a stout heart and say:—The answer to that whereof thou asketh me is this. Put the heads of two sticks into one of the holes; then take the other

1 This is a rechauffé of the Sandal-Wood Merchant and the Sharpers.

two sticks and lay them across the middle of the first two and stop with their two heads the second hole and with their ferrules the fourth hole. Then take the ferrules of the first two sticks and stop with them the third hole.[1]" So he repaired to the Wazir and repeated to him the answer; and he marvelled at its justness and said to him, "Go; by Allah; I will ask thee no more questions, for thou with thy skill marrest my foundation.[2]" Then he treated him as a friend, and the merchant acquainted him with the affair of the old woman; whereupon quoth the Wazir, "Needs must the intelligent company with the intelligent." Thus did this weak woman restore to that man his life and his monies on the easiest wise; "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Simpleton Husband." When the king heard this, he said, "How like it must be to this our own case!" Then he bade the Minister retire to his lodging; so he withdrew and on the morrow he abode at home till the king should summon him to his presence.

The Ninth Night of the Month.

When the night came, the king sat private in his chamber and sending after the Wazir, sought of him the story; and he said, "Hear, O august king,

THE TALE OF THE SIMPLETON HUSBAND.[3]"

There was once in olden time a foolish man and an ignorant, who had abounding wealth, and his wife was a beautiful woman

1 I have followed Mr. Payne's adaptation of the text as he makes sense, whilst the Arabic does not. I suppose that the holes are disposed crosswise.

2 *i.e.*, thy skill is so great that thou wilt undermine my authority with the king.

3 This famous tale is first found in a small collection of Latin fables (Adolphi Fabulæ apud Leyser Hist. Poet. Medii Ævi, p. 200-8), beginning

Cæcus erat quidam, cui pulcra virago, etc.

The date is 1315, and Caxton printed it in English in 1483; hence it was adopted by Boccaccio, Day vii., Novella 9; whence Chaucer's "Marchaundes Tale": this, by-the-by, was translated by Pope in his sixteenth or seventeenth year, and christened "January and May" The same story is inserted in La Fontaine (Contes, lib. ii., No. 8), "*La Gageure des trois Commères*," with the normal poirier; and lastly it appears in Wieland's "Oberon," canto vi.; where the Fairy King restores the old husband's sight, and Titania makes the lover on the pear-tree invisible. Mr. Clouston refers me also to the Bahár-i-Dánush, or Prime of Knowledge (Scott's translation, vol. ii., 64-68); "How the Brahman learned the Tirrea Bede"; to the Turkish "Kirk Wazir" (Forty Wazirs) of Shaykh-Zadeh (xxivth Wazir's story); to the "Comœdia Lydiæ," and to Barbazan's "Fabliaux et Contes," t. iii., p. 451, "La Saineresse," the cupping-woman.

who loved a handsome youth. The Cicisbeo used to watch for her husband's absence and come to her, and on this wise he abode a long while. One day of the days, as the woman was closeted with her lover, he said to her, "O my lady and my beloved, an thou desire me and love me, give me possession of thy person and satisfy my need in the presence of thy husband; otherwise I will never again come to thee nor draw near thee while I live my life." Now she loved him with exceeding love and could not suffer his separation an hour nor could endure to anger him; so, when she heard his words, she said to him, "Bismillah, so be it, in Allah's name, O my darling and coolth of mine eyes: may he not live who would vex thee!" Quoth he, "To-day?" and quoth she, "Yes, by thy life," and made an appointment with him for this. When her husband came home, she said to him, "I want to go a-pleasuring," and he said, "With all my heart." So he went, till he came to a goodly place, abounding in vines and water, whither he carried her and pitched her a tent by the side of a tall tree; and she betook herself to a place alongside the tent and made her there a Sardáb, in which she hid her lover. Then said she to her husband, "I want to climb this tree[1]"; and he said, "Do so." So she clomb it and when she came to the tree-top, she cried out and slapped her face, saying, "O thou lecher, are these thy lewd ways? Thou swarest faith to me and thou liedest." And she repeated her speech twice and thrice. Then she came down from the tree and rent her raiment and said, "O lecher, an these be thy dealings with me before my eyes, how dost thou when thou art absent from me?" Quoth he, "What aileth thee?" and quoth she, "I saw thee enjoy the woman before my very eyes." Cried he, "Not so, by Allah! But hold thy peace till I go up and see." So he clomb the tree and no sooner did he begin to do so then out came the lover from his hiding-place and taking hold of the woman fell to embracing her. When the husband came to the top of the tree, he looked and beheld a man possessing his wife; so he called out, "O whore, what doings are these?" and he made haste to come down from the tree to the ground. But meanwhile the lover had returned to his hiding-place and his wife asked him, "What sawest thou?" and he answered, "I saw a man do an ill deed with thee." But she said, "Thou liest; thou sawest naught and sayst this only by way of phantasy." The same they did three several

1 In the European versions it is always a pear-tree.

times, and every time he clomb the tree the lover came up out of the underground place and enjoyed her, whilst her husband looked on and she still said, "Seest thou aught, O liar?" "Yes," would he answer, and came down in haste, but saw no one and she said to him, "By my life, look and speak naught but sooth!" Then he cried to her, "Arise, let us depart this place, for 'tis full of Jinn and Marids.[1]" Accordingly, they returned to their house and nighted there, and the man arose in the morning, assured that this was all but phantasy and fascination. And so the lover won his wicked will. "Nor, O king of the age," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the King and the Tither." When the king heard this from the Minister, he bade him go away, and he went.

The Tenth Night of the Month.

WHEN it was eventide, the king summoned the Wazir and sought of him the story of the King and the Tither, and he said, "Hear, O king,

THE TALE OF THE UNJUST KING AND THE TITHER."

There was once a king of the kings of the earth, who dwelt in a flourishing city, abounding in good; but he wronged its people and entreated them foully, so that he ruined the city; and he was named naught else but tyrant and oppressor. Now he was wont, whenas he heard of a violent man in another land, to send after him and lure him with lucre to take service with him; and there was a certain Tither, who exceeded all other Tithers in oppression of the people and foul dealing. So the king sent after him and when he stood before him, he found him a man of mighty fine presence and said to him, "Thou hast been described to me, but I see thou surpassest the description. Set out to me some of thy doings and sayings, so I may be dispensed therewith from enquiring into the whole of thy case." Answered the other, "With all my heart! Know, O king, that I oppress the folk and people the land, whilst other than I ruineth it and peopleth it not." Now the king was leaning back: but presently he sat upright and said, "Tell me of this." The Tither replied, "'Tis well: I go to the man whom I purpose to tithe and cozen him

1 This supernatural agency, ever at hand and ever credible to Easterns, makes this the most satisfactory version of the world-wide tale.

and feign to be busied with certain business, so that I seclude myself therewith from the people; and meanwhile the man is squeezed with the foulest of extortion, till naught of money is left him. Then I appear and they come in to me and questions arise concerning him and I say:—Indeed, I was ordered worse than this, for some one (may Allah curse him!) hath slandered him to the king. Presently I take half of his good and return him the rest publicly before the folk and dismiss him to his house, in all honour and worship, and he garreth the money returned be carried before him, whilst he blesseth me and all who are with him also bless me. So is it bruited abroad in the city that I have restored to him his monies and he himself notifieth the like, to the intent that he may have a claim on me for the favour due to those who praise me. On this wise I keep half his property. Then I seem to forget him till the year[1] hath passed over him, when I send for him and recall to him somewhat of that which hath befallen aforetime and require of him somewhat of money in secret; accordingly he doth this and hasteneth to his house and forwardeth whatso I bid him, with a contented heart. Then I send to another man, between whom and the first is enmity, and lay hands upon him and feign to the other man that it is he who hath slandered him to the king and hath taken the half of his good; and the people praise me.[2]" The King wondered at this and at his wily dealing and clever contrivance and made him controller of all his affairs and of his kingdom and the land was placed under his governance, and he said to him, "Take and people.[3]" One day, the Tither went out and saw an old man, a woodcutter, and with him wood; so he said to him, "Pay a dirham tithe for thy load." Quoth the Shaykh, "Behold, thou killest me and killest my family"; and quoth the Tither, "What? Who killeth the folk?" And the oldster answered, "An thou let me enter the city, I shall there sell the load for three dirhams, whereof I will give thee one and buy with the other two silvers what will support my family; but, an thou press me for the tithe outside the city, the load will sell but for one dirham and thou wilt take it and I shall

1 *i.e.*, till next harvest time.

2 The "'Ashshár," or Tither, is most unpopular in the Wales; and he generally merits his ill-repute. Tales conce of these extortioners abound in Egypt and Syria. The firs. ment will be so to regulate the tithes that the peasants may mercy of these "publicans and sinners" who, however, can ple have paid highly for appointment to office and must recoup themsel..

3 Arab. "'Ammir" = cause to flourish.

abide without food, I and my family. Indeed, thou and I in this circumstance are like unto David and Solomon (on the twain be the Peace!") "How so?" asked the Tither, and the woodcutter answered, "Do thou hear

THE STORY OF DAVID AND SOLOMON."

Certain husbandmen once made complaint to David (on whom be the Peace!) against some sheep-owners, whose flocks had come down upon their crops by night and had devoured them, and he bade value the crops and that the shepherds should make good the damage. But Solomon (on whom be the Peace!) rose and said, "Nay, but let the sheep be delivered to the husbandmen, so they may take their milk and wool, till they have recouped the value of their crops; then let the sheep return to their owners." Accordingly David reversed his own decision and caused execute that of Solomon; yet was David no oppressor; but Solomon's judgment was the juster, and he showed himself therein better versed in jurisprudence and Holy Law.[1] When the Tither heard the old man's speech, he felt ruthful and said to him, "O Shaykh, I make thee a gift of that which is due from thee, and do thou cleave to me and leave me not, so haply I may get of thee gain which shall do away from me my wrongousness and guide me on the path of righteousness." So the old man followed him, and there met him another with a load of wood. Quoth the Tither to him, "Pay me that which thou owest me"; and quoth he, "Have patience with me till to-morrow, for I owe the hire of a house, and I will sell another load of fuel and pay thee two days' tithe." But he refused him this and the Shaykh said to him, "An thou constrain him unto this, thou wilt compel him quit thy country, because he is a stranger here and hath no domicile; and if he remove on account of one dirham, thou wilt forfeit of him three hundred and sixty dirhams a year.[2] Thus wilt thou lose the mickle in keeping the little." Quoth the Tither, "Verily[3] will I give him a dirham every month to the rent of his lodging."

1 Arab. "Afkah," a better Fakih or theologian; all Moslem law being based upon the Koran, the Sayings (Hadis) and Doings (Sunnat) of the Prophet; and, lastly, the Rasm or immemorial custom of the country provided that it be not opposed to the other three.

2 If the number represent the days in the Moslem year it should be 354 (=6 months of 29 days and the rest of 30).

3 The affirmative particle "kad" preceding a verb in the past gives it a present and at times a future signification.

Then he went on and presently there met him a third woodcutter and he said to him, "Pay thy due"; but he said, "I will pay thee a dirham, when I enter the city; or take of me four dániks[1] now." Quoth the Tither, "I will not do it," but the Shaykh said to him, "Take of him the four daniks presently, for 'tis easy to take and hard to give back." Exclaimed the Tither, "By Allah 'tis good!" and he arose and hied on, crying out at the top of his voice and saying, "I have no power this day to do evil.[2]" Then he doffed his dress and went forth wandering at a venture, repenting unto his Lord. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this story stranger than that of the Robber who believed the Woman and sought refuge with Allah against falling in with her like, by reason of her cunning contrivance for herself." When the king heard this, he said to himself, "Since the Tither repented, in consequence of the woodcutter's warnings, it behoveth I leave this Wazir on life so I may hear the story of the Robber and the Woman." And he bade Al-Rahwan return to his lodging.

The Eleventh Night of the Month.

WHEN the evening came and the king had taken his seat, he summoned the Wazir and required of him the story of the Robber and the Woman. Quoth the Minister, "Hear, O king,

THE TALE OF THE ROBBER AND THE WOMAN."

A certain Robber was a cunning workman and used not to steal aught, till he had wasted all that was with him; moreover, he stole not from his neighbours, neither companied with any of the thieves, for fear lest some one should betray him, and his case become public. After this fashion he abode a great while, in flourishing condition, and his secret was concealed, till Almighty Allah decreed that he broke in upon a beggar, a poor man whom he deemed rich. When he gained access to the house, he found naught, whereat he was wroth, and necessity prompted him to wake that man, who lay asleep alongside of his wife. So he aroused him and said to him, "Show me thy treasure." Now he had no treasure to show;

1 A danik, the Persian "Dáng," is one-sixth of a dirham, *i.e.*, about one penny. See vol. ii. night lxxxi.

2 It would mightily tickle an Eastern audience to hear of a Tither being unable to do any possible amount of villany.

but the Robber believed him not and was instant upon him with threats and blows. When he saw that he got no profit of him, he said to him, "Swear by the oath of divorce[1] from thy wife that thou hast nothing." So he sware and his wife said to him, "Fie on thee! Wilt thou divorce me? Is not the hoard buried in yonder chamber?" Then she turned to the Robber and conjured him to be weightier of blows upon her husband, till he should deliver to him the treasure, anent which he had forsworn himself. So he drubbed him with a grievous drubbing, till he carried him to a certain chamber, wherein she signed to him that the hoard was and that he should take it up. So the Robber entered, he and the husband; and when they were both in the chamber, she locked on them the door, which was a stout and strong, and said to the Robber, "Woe to thee, O fool! Thou hast fallen into the trap and now I have but to cry out and the officers of police will come and take thee and thou wilt lose thy life, O Satan!" Quoth he, "Let me go forth"; and quoth she, "Thou art a man and I am a woman; and in thy hand is a knife, and I am afraid of thee." He cried, "Take the knife from me." So she took it and said to her husband, "Art thou a woman and he a man? Pain his neck-nape with tunding, even as he tunded thee; and, if he put out his hand to thee, I will cry out a single cry and the policeman will come and take him and hew him in two." So the husband said to him, "O thousand-horned,[2] O dog, O dodger, I owe thee a deposit[3] wherefor thou hast dunned me." And he fell to bashing him grievously with a stick of holm-oak,[4] whilst he called out to the woman for help and prayed her to deliver him: but she said, "Keep thy place till the morning, and thou shalt see queer things." And her husband beat him within the chamber, till he killed[5] him and he swooned away. Then he left beating him and when the Robber came to himself, the woman said to her husband, "O man, this house is on hire and we owe its owners much money, and we have naught; so how wilt thou do?" And she went on to be-

1 *i.e.*, the oath of triple divorce which is, I have said, irrevocable, and the divorcée may not be taken again by her husband till her marriage with another man (the Mustahill of The Nights) has been consummated. See vol. iii. night cclvi.

2 *i.e.*, thousandfold cuckold.

3 Arab. "Wadi'ah" = the blows which the Robber had given him.

4 "Arab. "Sindiyán" (from the Persian) gen. used for the holm-oak, the *Quercus pseudo-coccifera*, vulgarly termed ilex, or native oak, and forming an extensive scrub in Syria. For this and other varieties of *Quercus*, as the Mallúl and the Ballút, see Unexplored Syria, i. 68.

5 Hibernicè.

speak him thus. The Robber asked, "And what is the amount of the rent?" The husband answered, "'Twill be eighty dirhams"; and the thief said, "I will pay this for thee and do thou let me go my way." Then the wife enquired, "O man, how much do we owe the baker and the greengrocer?" Quoth the Robber, "What is the sum of this?" And the husband said, "Sixty dirhams." Rejoined the other, "That makes two hundred dirhams; let me go my way and I will pay them." But the wife said, "O my dear, and the girl groweth up and needs must we marry her and equip her and do what else is needful." So the Robber said to the husband, "How much dost thou want?" and he rejoined, "An hundred dirhams in a modest way.[1]" Quoth the Robber, "That maketh three hundred dirhams." Then the woman said, "O my dear, when the girl is married, thou wilt need money for winter expenses, charcoal and firewood and other necessaries." The Robber asked, "What wouldst thou have?" And she answered, "An hundred dirhams." He rejoined, "Be it four hundred dirhams." And she continued, "O my dear and O coolth of mine eyes, needs must my husband have capital in hand,[2] wherewith he may buy goods and open him a shop." Said he, "How much will that be?" And she, "An hundred dirhams." Quoth the Robber, "That maketh five hundred dirhams; I will pay it; but may I be triply divorced from my wife if all my possessions amount to more than this, and they be the savings of twenty years! Let me go my way, so I may deliver them to thee." Cried she, "O fool, how shall I let thee go thy way? Utterly impossible! Be pleased to give me a right token.[3]" So he gave her a token for his wife and she cried out to her young daughter and said to her, "Keep this door." Then she charged her husband to watch over the Robber, till she should return, and repairing to his wife, acquainted her with his case and told her that her husband the thief had been taken and had compounded for his release, at the price of seven hundred dirhams, and named to her the token. Accordingly, she gave her the money and she took it and returned to her house. By this time, the dawn had dawned; so she let the thief go his way, and when he went out, she said to him, "O my dear, when shall I see

1 Lit. "In the way of moderation" = at least, at the most moderate reckoning.

2 Arab. "Rasmál," the vul. Syrian and Egyptian form of Raas al-mál=stock-in-trade.

3 Usually a ring or something from his person to show that all was fair play; here, however, it was a watchword.

thee come and take the treasure?" And he, "O indebted one,[1] when thou needest other seven hundred dirhams, wherewith to amend thy case and that of thy children and to pay thy debts." And he went out, hardly believing in his deliverance from her. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Three Men and our Lord Ísà." So the king bade him hie to his own home.

The Twelfth Night of the Month.

WHEN it was eventide, the king summoned the Minister and bade him tell the promised tale. He replied, "Hearing and obeying. Give ear, O glorious king, to

THE TALE OF THE THREE MEN AND OUR LORD ISA."

Three men once went out questing treasure and came upon a nugget of gold, weighing fifty maunds.[2] When they saw it, they took it up on their shoulders and carried it till they drew near a certain city, when one of them said, "Let us sit in the cathedral-mosque,[3] whilst one of us shall go and buy us what we may eat." So they sat down in the mosque and one of them arose and entered the city. When he came therein, his soul prompted him to false his two fellows and get the gold to himself alone. Accordingly, he bought food and poisoned it: but, when he returned to his comrades, they sprang upon him and slew him, in order that they might

1 Arab. "Yá Madyúbah," prob. a clerical error for "Madyúnah," alluding to her many debts which he had paid. Here, however, I suspect the truly Egyptian term "Yá Manyúkah!" a delicate term of depreciation which may be heard a dozen times a day in the streets of Cairo. It has also a masculine form, "Yá Manyúk!"

2 About = 100 lb. Mr. Sayce (Comparative Philol. p. 210) owns that Mn is old Egyptian but makes it a loan from the "Semites," like Sús (horse), Sar (prince), Sepet (lip) and Murcabutha (chariot), and goes to its origin in the Accadian column, because "it is not found before the times when the Egyptians borrowed freely from Palestine." But surely it is premature to draw such conclusion when we have so much still to learn concerning the dates of words in Egyptian.

3 Arab. Jámi'. This anachronism, like many of the same kind, is only apparent. The faith preached by Sayyidná Isà was the Islam of his day and dispensation, and it abrogated all other faiths till itself abrogated by the mission of Mohammed. It is therefore logical to apply to it terms which we should hold to be purely Moslem. On the other hand it is not logical to paint the drop-curtain of the Ober-Ammergau "Miracle-play" with the mosque of Omar and the minarets of Al-Islam. I humbly represented this fact to the mechanicals of the village whose performance brings them in so large a sum every decade; but Snug, Snout and Bottom turned up the nose of contempt and looked upon me as a mere "shallow sceptic."

enjoy the gold without him. Then they ate of the poisoned food and died, and the gold lay cast down over against them. Presently Ísà bin Maryam (on whom be the Peace!) passed by and seeing this, besought Allah Almighty for tidings of their case; so He told him what had betided them, whereat great was his surprise and he related to his disciples[1] what he had seen. Quoth one of them, "O Spirit of Allah,[2] naught resembleth this but my own adventure." Quoth Isa, "How so?" and the other began to tell

THE DISCIPLE'S STORY.

Once I was in such a city, where I hid a thousand dirhams in a monastery. After a while, I went thither and taking the money, bound it about my waist. Then I set out to return and when I came to the Saharà[3]-waste, the carrying of the money was heavy upon me. Presently, I espied a horseman pushing on after me; so I waited till he came up and said to him, "O rider, carry this money for me and earn reward and recompense in Heaven." Said he, "No, I will not do it, for I should tire myself and tire out my horse." Then he went on but, before he had gone far, he said in his mind, "An I take up the money and put my steed to speed and devance him, how shall he overtake me?" And I also said in my mind, "Verily, I erred; for, had he taken the money and made off, what could I have done?" Then he turned back to me and cried to me, "Hand over the money, that I may carry it for thee." But I replied to him, "That which hath occurred to thy mind hath occurred to mine also; so go thou and go safe." Quoth Isa (on whom be the Peace!), "Had these done prudently, they had taken thought for themselves; but they unheeded the issues of events; for that whoso acteth cautiously is safe and winneth his wish, and whoso neglecteth precaution is lost and repenteth.[4]" "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this

1 Arab. "Talámizah," plur. of Tilmíz, a disciple, a young attendant. The word is Syriac ܬܠܡܝܕ : and there is a Heb. root לכר but no Arabic. In the Durrat al-Ghawwás, however, Tilmíz, Bilkís, and similar words are Arabic in the form of Fa'líl and Fi'líl.

2 Rúh Allah, lit. = breath of Allah, attending to the miraculous conception according to the Moslems. See vol. iv. night ccccIviii.

3 Readers will kindly pronounce this word "Sahrá," not Saháirá.

4 Mr. Clouston refers for analogies to this tale to his "Oriental Sources of some of Chaucer's Tales" (Notes and Queries, 1885-86), and he finds the original of The Pardoner's Tale in one of the Játakas or Buddist Birth-stories entitled Vedabbha Jataka. The story is spread over all Europe; in the Cento Novelle Antiche; Morlini; Hans Sachs, etc. And there are many Eastern

stranger or rarer than the story of the King, whose kingdom was restored to him and his wealth, after he had become poor, possessing not a single dirham." When the king heard this, he said in himself, "How like is this to my own story in the matter of the Minister and his slaughter! Had I not used deliberation, I had done him dead." And he bade Al-Rahwan hie to his own home.

The Thirteenth Night of the Month.

WHEN the evening evened, the king sent for the Wazir to his sitting-chamber and bade him tell the promised tale. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. They relate, O king,

THE TALE OF THE DETHRONED RULER WHOSE REIGN AND WEALTH WERE RESTORED TO HIM."

There was once, in a city of the cities of Al-Hind, a just king and a beneficent, and he had a Wazir, a man of understanding, upright in his rede, and praiseworthy in his policy, a Minister in whose hand was the handling of all the affairs of the realm; for he was firmly based on the Sultan's favour and high in esteem with the folk of his time, and the king set great store by him and entrusted himself to him in all his transactions, by reason of his excellent management of the lieges, and he had guards[1] who were content with him and grateful to him. Now that king had a brother, who envied him and would lief have taken his place; and when he was a-weary of looking for his death and the term of his life seemed distant, he took counsel with certain of his partisans and they said, "The Minister is the monarch's counsellor and but for this Wazir the king were kingdomless." So the pretender cast about for the ruin of the defender, but could find no means of furthering his design; and when the affair grew longsome upon him, he said to his wife, "What deemest thou will gar us gain herein?" "What is it?" "I mean in the matter of yonder Minister, who inciteth my brother to worship with all his might and biddeth him unto devoutness, and indeed the king doteth upon his counsel and stablisheth him governor

versions, *e.g.*, a Persian by Farid al-Din "'Attar" who died at a great age in A.D. 1278; an Arabic version in The Orientalist (Kandy, 1884), a Tibetan in Rollston's Tibetan Tales; a Kashmirian in Knowles' Dict of Kashmiri Proverbs, etc., etc, etc

1 Arab "'Awán" lit. = aids, helpers; the "Aun of the Jinn" has often occurred.

of all monies and matters." "True; but how shall we devise with him?" "I have a device, so thou wilt help me in that which I shall say to thee." "Thou shalt have my help in whatsoever thou desirest." "I mean to dig him a pit in the vestibule and conceal it artfully." Accordingly, he did this, and when it was night, he covered the pit with a light covering, so that, when the Wazir trod upon it, it would give way under his tread. Then he sent to him and summoned him to the Court in the king's name, and the messenger bade him enter by the private wicket-way. So he came in alone, and when he stepped upon the covering of the pit, it caved in with him and he fell to the bottom; whereupon the king's brother fell to pelting him with stones. When the Minister beheld what had betided him he gave himself up for lost; so he stirred not for a while and lay still. The Prince, seeing him make no sign, deemed him dead; so he took him forth and wrapping him up in his robes, cast him into the surges of the sea in the middle night. When the Wazir felt the water, he awoke from the swoon and swam for an hour or so, till a ship passed by him, whereupon he shouted to the sailors and they took him up. Now when the morning morrowed, the people went seeking for him, but found him not; and the king learning this, was perplexed concerning his affair and abode unknowing whatso he should do. Then he sought for a Minister to stand in his stead, and the king's brother said, "I have for Wazir an efficient man." Said the king, "Bring him to me." So he brought him a man, whom he set at the head of affairs; but he seized upon the kingdom and threw the king in fetters and made his brother king in lieu of him. The new ruler gave himself up to all manner of frowardness, whereat the folk murmured and his Minister said to him, "I fear lest the Hindians take the old king and restore him to the kingship and we both come to ruin: so, if we seize him and cast him into the sea, we shall be at rest from him; and we will publish among the folk that he is dead." And they, agreeing upon this, took him up and carrying him out to sea, cast him in. When he felt the water, he struck out, and ceased not swimming till he landed upon an island, where he tarried five days finding nothing which he might eat or drink; but, on the sixth day, when he despaired of his life, behold, there passed a ship; so he made signals to the crew and they came and took him up and fared on with him to an inhabited country, where they set him ashore, mother-naked as he was. There, seeing a man seeding, he sought guidance of him and the husbandman asked, "Art thou

a foreigner?" "Yes," answered the king, and sat with him and they talked. The peasant found him clever and quick-witted and said to him, "An thou beheld a comrade of mine, thou wouldst see him the like of what I see thee, for his case is even as thy case, and he is at this present my friend." Quoth the king, "Verily, thou makest me long to look at him. Canst thou not bring us together, me and him?" Quoth the husbandman, "With joy and goodly glee"; and the king sat with him till he had made an end of his seeding, when he carried him to his homestead and brought him in company with the other stranger, and behold it was his Wazir. When each saw other, the twain wept and embraced, and the sower wept for their weeping; but the king hid their affair and said to him, "This man is from my mother-land and he is as my brother." So they homed with the husbandman and helped him for a hire, wherewith they supported themselves a long spell. Meanwhile, they sought news of their patrial stead and learned that which its people suffered of straitness and severity. One day there came a ship and in it a merchant from their own country, who knew them and rejoiced in them with joy exceeding and clad them in goodly clothing. He also acquainted them with the manner of the treachery that had been practised upon them, and counselled them to return to their own land, they and he with whom they had made friends,[1] assuring them that Almighty Allah would restore them to their former rank. So the king returned and the folk joined themselves to him and he fell upon his brother and his Wazir and took them and threw them into jail. Then he sat down again upon the throne of his kingship, whilst the Minister stood between his hands and they returned to their former estate, but they had naught of worldly wealth. Presently the king said to his Wazir, "How shall we continue tarrying in this city, and we thus poorly conditioned?" and he answered, "Be at thine ease and have no concern." Then he singled out one of the soldiers[2] and said to him, "Send us thy service[3] for the year." Now there were in the city fifty thousand subjects[4] and in the hamlets and villages[5] a like number; and the Minister sent to each of these, saying, "Let each and every of you get

1 *i.e.*, the peasant.

2 *i.e.*, those serving on the usual feudal tenure; and bound to suit and service for their fiefs.

3 *i.e.*, the yearly value of his fief.

4 *i.e.*, men who paid taxes.

5 Arab. "Rasátik" plur. of Rusták. See vol. v. night dcxxxiv.

an egg and set it under a hen." They did this and it was neither burden nor grievance to them; and when twenty days had passed by, each egg was hatched, and the Wazir bade them pair the chickens, male with female, and rear them well. They did accordingly and it was found a charge unto no one. Then they waited for them awhile and after this the Minister asked of the chickens and was answered that they were become fowls. Furthermore, they brought him all their eggs and he bade set them; and after twenty days there were hatched from each pair of them thirty or five-and-twenty or fifteen chickens at the least. The Wazir bade note against each man the number of chickens which pertained to him, and after two months, he took the old partlets and the cockerels, and there came to him from each man some half a score, and he left the young partlets with them. Even so he sent to the country folk and let the cocks remain with them. Thus he got him whole broods of young poultry and appropriated to himself the sale of the fowls, and on this wise he gained for him, in the course of a year, that which the kingly estate required of the King, and his affairs were set right for him by the cunning contrivance of the Minister. And he caused the country to thrive and dealt justly by his subjects and returned to them all that he took from them and lived a grateful and prosperous life. Thus right counsel and prudence are better than wealth, for that understanding profiteth at all times and seasons. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Man whose caution slew him." When the king heard the words of his Wazir, he wondered with the uttermost wonder and bade him retire to his lodging.

The Fourteenth Night of the Month.

When the Minister returned to the presence, the king sought of him the story of the Man whose caution slew him, and he said, "Hear, O auspicious King,

THE TALE OF THE MAN WHOSE CAUTION SLEW HIM."

There was once a man who was cautious exceedingly concerning himself, and he set out one day on a journey to a land abounding in wild beasts. The caravan wherewith he fared came by night to the gate of a city; but the warders would not open to them, for there were lions there; so they nighted without

the walls. Now that man, of the excess of his caution, could not determine a place wherein he should pass the night, for fear of the wild beasts and reptiles; so he went about seeking an empty stead wherein he might lie. At last, as there was a ruined building hard by, he climbed up on to a high wall and ceased not clambering hither and thither, of the excess of his carefulness, till his feet betrayed him and he slipped and fell to the bottom and died, whilst his companions arose in the morning safe and sound. Now, had he overmastered his wrongous rede and had he submitted himself to Fate and Fortune, it had been safer and better for him; but he made light of the folk and belittled their wit and was not content to take example by them; for his soul whispered him that he was a man of wits and he fancied that, an he abode with them, he would perish; so his folly cast him into perdition. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Man who was lavish of his house and his provision to one he knew not." When the King heard this, he said, "I will not separate myself from the folk and slay my Minister." And he bade him hie to his own house.

The Fifteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade fetch the Wazir and required of him the story. So he said, "Hear, O King,

THE TALE OF THE MAN WHO WAS LAVISH OF HIS HOUSE AND HIS PROVISION TO ONE WHOM HE KNEW NOT.[1]"

There was once an Arab of high rank and noble presence, a model of magnanimity and exalted generosity, and he had brethren, with whom he consorted and caroused, and they were wont to assemble by rotation at one another's homes. When it came to his turn, he gat ready in his house all manner goodly meats and pleasant and dainty drinks and the fairest flowers and the finest fruits, and he provided all kinds of instruments of music and store of wondrous dictes and marvellous stories and pleasant instances and histories and witty anecdotes and verses and what not else, for there was none among those with whom he was wont to company but enjoyed this in every goodly fashion, and the

1 This adventure is a rechauffé of Amjad's adventure (vol. iii. night ccxxxi.) without, however, its tragic catastrophe.

entertainment he had provided contained all whereof each had need. Then he sallied forth in quest of his friends, and went round about the city, so he might assemble them; but found none of them at home. Now in that town was a man of pleasant conversation and large generosity, a merchant of condition, young of years and bright of blee, who had come to that place from his own country with merchandise in great store and wealth galore. He took up his abode therein and the town was pleasant to him and he was large in lavishing, so that he came to the end of all his wealth and there remained in his hand naught save what was upon him of raiment. So he left the lodging which had homed him in the days of his prosperity; after he had wasted that which was therein of furniture, and fell to finding refuge in the houses of the townsfolk from night to night. One day, as he went wandering about the streets, he beheld a woman of the uttermost beauty and loveliness, and what he saw of her charms amazed him and there happened to him what made him forget his sorry plight. She accosted him and jested with him and he besought her of union and intimacy; so she consented to this and said to him, "Let us go to thy lodging." Herewith he repented and was perplexed concerning his procedure and grieved for that which must escape him of her company by reason of the straitness of his hand, for that he had not a whit of spending-money. But he was ashamed to say "No," after he had sued and wooed her; wherefore he went on before her, bethinking him how he should rid himself of her and seeking some excuse which he might put off on her, and gave not over going from street to street, till he entered one that had no issue and saw, at the farther end, a door, whereon was a padlock. Then said he to her, "Do thou excuse me, for my lad hath locked the door and how shall we open it?" Said she, "O my lord, the padlock is worth only some ten dirhams"; and presently she tucked up her sleeves from fore-arms as they were crystal and taking a stone, smote the padlock and broke it; and, opening the door, said to him, "Enter, O my lord." Accordingly he went in, committing his affair to Allah (to whom belong Honour and Glory!), and she entered after him and locked the door from within. They found themselves in a pleasant house, collecting all good and gladness; and the young man fared forwards, till he came to the sitting-chamber, and, behold, it was furnished with the finest of furniture as hath before been set out.[1] He seated himself and leant upon

1 The text is so concise as to be enigmatical. The house was finely furnished for a feast, as it belonged to the Man who was lavish, etc.

a cushion, whilst she put out her hand to her veil and doffed it. Then she threw off her heavy outer clothes till she was clad in the thinnest which showed her charms, whereupon the young man embraced her and kissed her and enjoyed her; after which they washed with the Ghusl-ablution and returned to their place and he said to her, "Know that I have little knowledge of what goeth on in my own house, for that I trust to my servant: so arise thou and see what the lad hath made ready in the kitchen." Accordingly, she arose and going down into the kitchen, saw cooking pots over the fire, wherein were all manner of dainty viands, and firsts-bread[1] and fresh almond cakes.[2] So she set bread on a dish and ladled out what she would from the pots and brought it to him. They ate and drank and played and made merry a while of the day; and as they were thus engaged, suddenly up came the master of the house, with his friends, whom he had brought with him, that they might converse together, as of wont. He saw the door opened and knocked a light knock, saying to his company, "Have patience with me, for some of my family are come to visit me: wherefore excuse belongeth first to Allah Almighty, and then to you.[3]" So they farewelled him and fared their ways, whilst he rapped another light rap at the door. When the young man heard this, he changed colour and the woman said to him, "Methinks thy lad hath returned." He answered, "Yes"; and she arose and opening the door to the master of the house, said to him, "Where hast thou been? Indeed, thy master is angry with thee?" and he said, "O my lady, I have not been save about his business." Then he girt his waist with a kerchief and entering, saluted the young merchant, who said to him, "Where hast thou been?" Quoth he, "I have done thine errands"; and quoth the youth, "Go and eat and come hither and drink." So he went away, as he bade him, and ate; then he washed hands and returning to the sitting-room, sat down on the carpet and fell to talking with them; whereupon the young merchant's heart was heartened and his breast broadened and he applied himself to pleasure. They were in all joyance of life and the most abounding pleasance till a third part of the night was past, when the house-

1 Arab. "Khubz Samíz"; the latter is the Arabisation of the Pers. Samíd, fine white bread, símnel, Germ. semmel.

2 The text has "Bakúlát" = pot-herbs; but it is probably a clerical error for "Bakláwát." See vol. ii. night cxvi.

3 Egyptian-like he at once calls upon Allah to witness a lie and his excuse would be that the lie was well-intentioned.

master arose, and spreading them a bed, invited them to take their rest. So they lay down and the youth wide awake, pondering their affair till daybreak, when the woman roused herself from sleep and said to her companion, "I wish to go." He farewelled her and she departed; whereupon the master of the house followed her with a purse of silver and gave it to her, saying, "Blame not my lord," and made his excuse to her for his master. Then he returned to the youth and said to him, "Arise and come to the Hammam[1]"; and he fell to shampooing his hands and feet, whilst the youth called down blessings on him and said, "O my lord, who art thou? Methinks there is not in the world the like of thee; no, nor a pleasanter in thy disposition." Then each of the twain acquainted the other with his case and condition and they went to the bath; after which the master of the house conjured the young merchant to return with him and summoned his friends. So they ate and drank and he told them the tale, wherefore they thanked the house-master and praised him; and their friendship was complete while the young merchant abode in the town, till Allah made easy to him a means of travel, whereupon they farewelled him and he departed; and this is the end of his tale. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "O king of the age, is this stranger than the story of the Richard who lost his wealth and his wit." When the king heard the Minister's story, it pleased him and he bade him hie to his home.

The Sixteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King sat in his sitting-chamber and sending for his Wazir, bade him relate the story of the Wealthy Man who lost his wealth and his wit. So he said, "Hear, O King,

THE TALE OF THE MELANCHOLIST AND THE SHARPER.[2]"

There was once a Richard hight 'Ajlán, the Hasty, who wasted his wealth, and concern and chagrin gat the mastery of him, so that he became a Melancholist[3] and lost his wit. There

1 *i.e.*, the private bagnio which in old days every grand house possessed.

2 This is a fancy title, but it suits the tale better than that in the text (xi. 183), "The Richard who lost his wealth and his wits." Mr. Clouston refers to similar stories in Sacchetti and other early Italian novelists.

3 Arab. "Al-Muwaswis": for "Wiswás" see vol. i. night xi. This class of men in stories takes the place of our "cunning idiot," and is often confounded with the Saudáwi, the melancholist proper.

remained with him of his monies about twenty dinars and he used to beg alms of the folk, and whatso they gave him in charity he would gather together and add to the gold pieces that were left him. Now there was in that town a Sharper, who made his living by roguery, and he knew that the Melancholist had somewhat of money; so he fell to spying upon him and ceased not watching him till he saw him put into an earthen pot that which he had with him of silvers and enter a deserted ruin, where he sat down, as if to make water, and dug a hole, wherein he laid the pot and covering it up, smoothed the ground as it had been. Then he went away and the Sharper came and taking what was in the pot, restored it to its former place. Presently 'Ajlan returned, with somewhat to add to his hoard, but found it not; so he bethought him of who had followed him and remembered that he had found that Sharper assiduous in sitting with him and questioning him. So he went in search of him, assured that he had taken the pot, and gave not over looking for him till he saw him sitting; whereupon he ran to him and the Sharper saw him. Then the Melancholist stood within earshot and muttered[1] to himself and said, "In the pot are sixty ducats and I have with me other twenty in such a place and to-day I will unite the whole in the pot." When the Sharper heard him say this to himself, muttering and mumbling, repeating and blundering in his speech, he repented him of having taken the sequins and said, "He will presently return to the pot[2] and find it empty; wherefore that for which I am on the look-out will escape me; and meseemeth 'twere best I replace the dinars, so he may see them and leave all which is with him in the pot, and I can take the whole." Now he feared to return to the pot at once, lest the Melancholist should follow him to the place and find nothing and on this wise his arrangements be marred; so he said to him, "O 'Ajlan,[3] I would have thee come to my lodging and eat bread with me." Thereupon the Melancholist went with him to his quarters and he seated him there and going to the market, sold somewhat of his clothes and pawned somewhat from his house and bought the best of food. Then he betook himself to the ruin and replacing the money in the pot, buried it again; after which he returned to his lodging and gave the Melancholist to eat and drink, and they went out together. The Sharper walked

1 Arab. "Hamhama," an onomapœic, like a hum, hem, and haw.

2 Arab. "Barniyah," a vessel either of glass or pottery like that in which the manna was collected (Exod. xvi. 33).

3 =A hasty man, as Ghazbán=an angry man.

away and hid himself, lest his guest should see him, whilst 'Ajlan repaired to his hiding-place and took the pot. Presently, the Sharper returned to the ruin, rejoicing in that which he deemed he should get, and dug in the place, but found naught and knew that the Melancholist had outwitted him. So he began buffeting his face for regret, and fell to following the other whitherso he went, to the intent that he might win what was with him, but he failed in this, because the Melancholist knew what was in his mind and was assured that he spied upon him; so he kept watch over himself. Now, had the Sharper considered the consequences of haste and that which is begotten of loss therefrom, he had not done on such wise. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this tale, O king of the age, rarer or stranger or daintier than the story of Khalbas[1] and his Wife and the learned man and that which befell between the three." When the king heard this story, he left his purpose of putting the Minister to death and his soul bade him to continue him on life. So he ordered him off to his house.

The Seventeenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister, and as soon as he presented himself, he required of him the story. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Hear, O august King,

THE TALE OF KHALBAS AND HIS WIFE AND THE LEARNED MAN."

There was once a man called Khalbas, who was a fulsome fellow, a calamity, notorious for this note, and he had a charming wife renowned for beauty and loveliness. A man of his townsfolk fell in love with her and she also loved him. Now Khalbas was a wily wight and full of guile, and there was in his neighbourhood a learned man, to whom the folk used to resort every day and he told them histories and admonished them with moral instances; and Khalbas was wont to be present in his assembly, for the sake of making a show before the folk. This learned man also had a wife famed for comeliness and seemlihead and quick-

1 The Bresl Edit. misprints "Khablas" in more places than one, now with a Sin, then with a Sád. Khalbas suggests "Khalbús," a buffoon, for which see vol. ii. night lv. In Egypt, however, the latter generally ends in a Sad (see Lane's "Khalboos" M. E chap. xxvii).

ness of wit and understanding, and the lover sought some device whereby he might manage to meet Khalbas's wife; so he came to him and told him as a secret what he had seen of the learned man's wife and confided to him that he was in love with her and besought his assistance in this. Khalbas told him that she was known as a model of chastity and continence, and that she exposed herself not to ill doubts; but the other said, "I cannot renounce her, in the first place because the woman inclineth to me and coveteth my wealth, and secondly, because of the greatness of my fondness for her; and naught is wanting but thy help." Quoth Khalbas, "I will do thy will"; and quoth the other, "Thou shalt have of me every day two silvern dirhams, on condition that thou sit with the learned man and that, when he riseth from the assembly, thou speak a word which shall notify to me the breaking up of the meeting." So they agreed upon that and Khalbas entered and sat in the session, whilst the lover was assured in his heart that the secret was safe and secure with him, wherefore he rejoiced and was content to pay the two dirhams. Then Khalbas used to attend the learned man's assembly, whilst the other would go into his wife and be very much with her, on such wise as he thought good, till the learned man arose from his meeting; and when Khalbas saw that he proposed rising, he would speak a word for the lover to hear, whereupon he went forth from the wife of Khalbas, who knew not that doom was in his own home. But when the learned man saw Khalbas do the same thing every day, he began to suspect him, especially on account of that which he knew of his bad name, and suspicion grew upon him; so, one day, he resolved to advance the time of his rising ere the wonted hour and hastening up to Khalbas, seized him and said to him, "By Allah, an thou say a single syllable, I will do thee a damage!" Then he went in to his wife, with Khalbas in his grip, and behold, she was sitting, as of her wont, nor was there about her aught of suspicious or unseemly. The learned man bethought him awhile of this, then made for Khalbas's house, which adjoined his own, still holding his man; and when they entered, they found the young lover lying on the bed with Khalbas's wife; whereupon quoth the learned man to him, "O accursed, the doom is with thee and in thine own home!" So Khalbas divorced his wife and went forth, fleeing, and returned not to his own land. "This, then" (continued the Wazir), "is the consequence of lewdness, for whoso purposeth in himself wile and perfidious guile, they get possession of him, and had Khalbas conceived of himself that dishonour and

calamity which he conceived of the folk, there had betided him nothing of this. Nor is this tale, rare and curious though it be, stranger or rarer than the story of the Devotee whose husband's brother accused her of lewdness." When the king heard this, wonderment gat hold of him and his admiration for the Wazir redoubled; so he bade him hie to his home and return to him on the morrow, according to his custom. So the Minister withdrew to his lodging, where he passed the night and the ensuing day.

The Eighteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Wazir and required of him the story; so he said, "'Tis well. Hear, O King,

THE TALE OF THE DEVOTEE ACCUSED OF LEWDNESS.[1]

There was once a man of Nísháb́úr[2] who, having a wife of the uttermost beauty and piety, yet was minded to set out on the pilgrimage. So before leaving home he commended her to the care of his brother and besought him to aid her in her affairs and further her wishes till he should return, for the brothers were on the most intimate terms.[3] Then he took ship and departed and his absence was prolonged. Meanwhile, the brother went to visit his brother's wife, at all times and seasons, and questioned her of her circumstances and went about her wants; and when his calls were prolonged and he heard her speech and saw her face, the love of her gat hold upon his heart, and he became passionately fond of her and his soul prompted him to evil. So he besought her to lie with him, but she refused and showed him how foul was his deed, and he found him no way to win what he wished; wherefore he wooed her with soft speech and gentle ways. Now she was

1 This story is a rechauffé of the Jewish Kazi and his pious wife; see vol. iii. night cccclxv.

2 The Arab form of "Nayshápúr"=reeds of (King) Shapúr: see vol. vii. night dccccltx.

3 Arab. "Alà Tarík al-Satr wa al-Salámah," meaning that each other's wives did not veil before their brothers-in-law as is usually done. It may also mean that they were under Allah's protection and in best of condition

righteous in all her doings and never swerved from one saying[1]; so, when he saw that she consented not to him, he had no doubts but that she would tell his brother, when he returned from his journey, and quoth he to her, "An thou consent not to whatso I require of thee, I will cause a scandal to befall thee and thou wilt perish." Quoth she, "Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) judge betwixt me and thee, and know that, shouldst thou hew me limb from limb, I would not consent to that thou biddest me to do." His ignorance[2] of womankind persuaded him that she would tell her spouse; so he betook himself of his exceeding despite, to a company of people in the mosque, and informed them that he had witnessed a man commit adultery with his brother's wife. They believed his word and documented his charge and assembled to stone her.[3] Then they dug her a pit outside the city and seating her therein, stoned her, till they deemed her dead, when they left her. Presently a Shaykh of a village passed by the pit and finding her alive, carried her to his house and cured her of her wounds. Now he had a youthful son, who, as soon as he saw her, loved her and besought her of her person; but she refused and consented not to him, whereupon he redoubled in love and longing, and his case prompted him to suborn a youth of the people of his village and agree with him that he should come by night and take somewhat from his father's house, and that, when he was seized and discovered, he should say that she was his accomplice in this, and avouch that she was his mistress and had been stoned on his account in the city. Accordingly he did this, and, coming by night to the villager's house, stole therefrom goods and clothes; whereupon the owner awoke and seizing the thief, pinioned him straitly and beat him to make him confess; and he confessed against the woman that she was a partner in the crime and that he was her lover from the city. The news was bruited abroad, and the citizens assembled to put her to death; but the Shaykh with whom she was forbade them and said, "I brought this woman hither, coveting the recompense of Allah, and I know not the truth of that which is said of her, and will not empower any to hurt or harm her." Then he gave her a thousand dirhams, by way of alms, and thrust her forth of the village.

1 *i.e.*, her "yes" meant "yes," and her "no" meant "no."

2 "Ignorance" (Jahl) may here and elsewhere mean wickedness, frowardness, folly, vicious folly or uncalled-for wrath.

3 So Mohammed said of a child born in adultery, "The babe to the blanket (*i.e.*, let it be nursed and reared) and the adultress to the stone."

As for the thief, he was imprisoned for some days; after which the folk interceded for him with the old man, saying, "This is a youth and indeed he erred"; and he released him from his bonds. Meanwhile the woman went out at hap-hazard, and donning a devotee's dress, fared on without ceasing till she came to a city and found the king's deputies dunning the townsfolk for the tribute, out of season. Presently, she saw a man, whom they were pressing for the tribute; so she asked of his case, and being acquainted with it, paid down the thousand dirhams for him and delivered him from the bastinado; whereupon he thanked her and those who were present. When he was set free, he walked with her and besought her to go with him to his dwelling: accordingly, she accompanied him thither and supped with him and passed the night. When the dark hours gloomed on him, his soul prompted him to evil, for that which he saw of her beauty and loveliness, and he lusted after her, and required her of her person; but she rejected him and threatened him with Allah the Most High, and reminded him of that which she had done with him of kindness, and how she had delivered him from the stick and its disgrace. However, he would not be denied, and when he saw her persistent refusal of herself to him, he feared lest she should tell the folk of him. So, when he arose in the morning, he wrote on a paper what he would of forgery and falsehood, and going up to the Sultan's palace, said, "I have an advisement for the King." So he bade admit him, and he delivered him the writ he had forged, saying, "I found this letter with the woman, the devotee, the ascetic, and indeed she is a spy, a secret informer against the sovran to his foe; and I deem the King's due more incumbent on me than any other claim and warning him to be the first duty, for that he uniteth in himself all the subjects, and but for the King's existence, the lieges would perish; wherefore I have brought thee good counsel." The King gave credit to his words and sent with him those who should lay hands upon the Devotee and do her to death; but they found her not. As for the woman, when the man went out from her, she resolved to depart; so she fared forth, saying to herself, "There is no wayfaring for me in woman's habit." Then she donned men's dress, such as is worn of the pious, and set out and wandered over the earth; nor did she cease wandering till she entered a certain city. Now the king of that city had an only daughter, in whom he gloried and whom he loved, and she saw the Devotee and deeming her a pilgrim youth, said to her father, "I would fain have this youth take up his lodging with

me, so I may learn of him lere and piety and religion." Her father rejoiced in this, and commanded the pilgrim to take up his abode with his daughter in his palace. So they were in one place; and the Princess was strenuous to the uttermost in continence and chastity and nobility of mind and magnanimity and devotion; but the ignorant tattled anent her, and the folk of the realm said, "The king's daughter loveth the pilgrim youth and he loveth her." Now the king was a very old man and destiny decreed the ending of his life-term; so he died and when he was buried, the lieges assembled and many were the sayings of the people and of the king's kinsfolk and officers, and they counselled together to slay the Princess and the young pilgrim, saying, "This fellow dishonoureth us with yonder whore, and none accepteth shame save the base." So they fell upon them and slew the king's daughter in her mosque, without asking her of aught; whereupon the pious woman (whom they deemed a youth) said to them, "Woe to you, O miscreants! Ye have slain the pious lady." Quoth they, "O thou fulsome fellow, dost thou bespeak us thus? Thou lovedst her and she loved thee, and we will assuredly slay thee." And quoth she, "Allah forfend. Indeed, the affair is the clear reverse of this." They asked, "What proof hast thou of that?" and she answered, "Bring me women." They did so, and when the matrons looked on her, they found her a woman. As soon as the townsfolk saw this, they repented of that they had done, and the affair was grievous to them; so they sought pardon of Allah and said to her, "By the virtue of Him whom thou servest, do thou crave pardon for us." Said she, "As for me, I may no longer tarry with you, and I am about to depart from you." Then they humbled themselves before her and shed tears and said to her, "We conjure thee, by the might of Allah the Most High, that thou take upon thyself the rule of the realm and of the lieges." But she refused and drew her back; whereupon they came up to her and wept and ceased not supplicating her, till she consented and undertook the kingship. Her first commandment to them was that they bury the Princess and build over her a dome, and she abode in that palace, worshipping the Almighty and dealing judgment between the people with justice, and Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed her, for the excellence of her piety and her patience and renunciation, the acceptance of her prayers, so that she sought not aught of Him (to whom belong Might and Majesty!), but He granted her petition; and her fame was bruited abroad in all lands. Accordingly,

the folk resorted to her from all parts and she used to pray Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) for the oppressed and the Lord granted him relief, and against his oppressor, and He brake him asunder; and she prayed for the sick and they were made sound; and in this goodly way she tarried a great space of time. So fared it with the wife; but as for her husband, when he returned from the pilgrimage, his brother and the neighbours acquainted him with the affair of his spouse, whereat he was sore concerned and suspected their story, for that which he knew of her chastity and prayerfulness; and he shed tears for the loss of her. Meanwhile, she prayed to Almighty Allah that He would stablish her innocence in the eyes of her spouse and the folk, and He sent down upon her husband's brother a sickness so sore that none knew a cure for him. Wherefore he said to his brother, "In such a city is a Devotee, a worshipful woman and a recluse whose prayers are accepted; so do thou carry me to her, that she may pray for my healing and Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) may give me ease of this disease." Accordingly, he took him up and journeyed with him, till they came to the village where dwelt the Shaykh, the grey beard who had rescued the devout woman from the pit, and carried her to his dwelling and healed her in his home. Here they halted and lodged with the old man, who questioned the husband of his case and that of his brother and the cause of their journey, and he said, "I purpose to go with my brother, this sick wight, to the holy woman, her whose petitions are answered, so she may pray for him, and Allah may heal him by the blessing of her orisons." Quoth the villager, "By Allah, my son is in parlous plight for sickness, and we have heard that this Devotee prayeth for the sick and they are made sound. Indeed, the folk counsel me to carry him to her, and behold,[1] I will go in company with you." And they said, "'Tis well." So they all nighted in that intent, and on the morrow they set out for the dwelling of the Devotee, this one carrying his son and that one bearing his brother. Now the man who had stolen the clothes and had forged against the pious woman a lie, to wit, that he was her lover, sickened of a sore sickness, and his people took him up and set out with him to visit the Devotee and crave her prayers, and Destiny brought them altogether by the way. So they fared forward in a body till they came to the city wherein the man dwelt for whom she had paid the thousand dirhams to deliver

1 Arab. "Wa há," etc., an interjection corresponding with the Syriac "ho"=lo! (*i.e.*, look) behold! etc.

him from torture, and found him about to travel to her by reason of a malady which had betided him. Accordingly, they all journeyed on together, unknowing that the holy woman was she whom they had so foully wronged, and ceased not going till they came to her city and foregathered at the gates of her palace, that wherein was the tomb of the Princess. Now the folk used to go in to her and salute her with the salam, and crave her orisons; and it was her custom to pray for none till he had confessed to her his sins, when she would ask pardon for him and pray for him that he might be healed, and he was straightway made whole of sickness, by permission of Almighty Allah. When the four sick men were brought in to her, she knew them forthright, though they knew her not, and said to them, "Let each of you confess and specify his sins, so I may sue pardon for him and pray for him." And the brother said, "As for me, I required my brother's wife of her person and she refused; whereupon despite and ignorance prompted me and I lied against her and accused her to the townsfolk of adultery; so they stoned her and slew her wrongously and unrighteously; and this my complaint is the issue of unright and falsehood and of the slaying of the innocent soul, whose slaughter Allah hath made unlawful to man." Then said the youth, the old villager's son, "And I, O holy woman, my father brought to us a woman who had been stoned, and my people nursed her till she recovered. Now she was rare of beauty and loveliness; so I required her of her person; but she refused and clave in chastity to Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!), wherefore ignorance prompted me, so that I agreed with one of the youths that he should steal clothes and coin from my father's house. Then I laid hands on him and carried him to my sire and made him confess. He declared that the woman was his mistress from the city and had been stoned on his account, and that she was his accomplice in the theft and had opened the doors to him; but this was a lie against her, for that she had not yielded to me in that which I sought of her. So there befell me what ye see of requital." And the young man, the thief, said, "I am he with whom thou agreedst concerning the theft, and to whom thou openedst the door, and I am he who accused her falsely and calumniously and Allah (extolled be He!) well knoweth that I never did evil with her; no, nor knew her in any way before that time." Then said he whom she had delivered from torture by paying down a thousand dirhams, and who had required her of her person in his house, for that her beauty pleased him, and

when she refused had forged a letter against her and treacherously denounced her to the Sultan, and requited her graciousness with ingratitude, "I am he who wronged her and lied against her, and this is the issue of the oppressor's affair." When she heard their words, in the presence of the folk, she cried, "Alhamdolillah, praise be to Allah, the King who over all things is omnipotent, and blessing upon His prophets and apostles!" Then quoth she to the assembly, "Bear testimony, O ye here present, to these men's speech, and know ye I am that woman whom they confess to have wronged." And she turned to her husband's brother and said to him, "I am thy brother's wife and Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) delivered me from that whereinto thou castedst me of calumny and suspicion, and from the folly and frowardness whereof thou hast spoken, and now hath He shown forth my innocence, of His bounty and generosity. Go, for thou art quit of the wrong thou didst me." Then she prayed for him and he was made sound of his sickness. Thereupon she said to the son of the village Shaykh, "Know that I am the woman whom thy father delivered from strain and stress, and whom there betided from thee of calumny and ignorance that which thou hast named." And she sued pardon for him and he was made sound of his sickness. Then said she to the thief, "I am the woman against whom thou liedst, avouching that I was thy leman who had been stoned on thine account, and that I was thine accomplice in robbing the house of the village Shaykh and had opened the doors to thee." And she prayed for him and he was made whole of his malady.[1] Then said she to the townsman, him of the tribute, "I am the woman who gave thee the thousand dirhams and thou didst with me what thou didst." And she asked pardon for him and prayed for him and he was made whole; whereupon the folk marvelled at her enemies who had all been afflicted alike, so Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) might show forth her innocence upon the heads of witnesses.[2] Then she turned to the old man who had delivered her from the pit and prayed for him, and gave him presents manifold and among them a myriad, a Badrah[3]; and the sick made whole departed from her. When she was alone with her husband, she made him draw near unto her and rejoiced in his arrival, and gave him the choice of abiding with her. Presently, she

1 This paragraph is supplied by Mr. Payne: something of the kind has evidently fallen out of the Arab text.

2 *i.e.*, in the presence of witnesses, legally.

3 Lit. a myriad, ten thousand dirhams. See vol. iii. night ccclxvi.

assembled the citizens and notified to them his virtue and worth, and counselled them to invest him with management of their rule, and besought them to make him king over them. They consented to her on this, and he became king and made his home amongst them, whilst she gave herself up to her orisons and cohabited with her husband as she was with him aforetime. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this tale, O king of the time, stranger or pleasanter than that of the Hireling and the Girl whose maw he slit and fled." When King Shah Bakht heard this, he said, "Most like, all they say of the Minister is leasing, and his innocence will be made manifest even as that of the Devotee was manifested." Then he comforted the Wazir's heart and bade him hie to his house.

The Nineteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade fetch the Wazir and sought of him the story of the Hireling and the Girl. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O auspicious King, to

THE TALE OF THE HIRELING AND THE GIRL."

There was once, of old time, in one of the tribes of the Arabs, a woman pregnant by her husband, and they had a hired servant, a man of insight and understanding. When the woman came to her delivery-time, she gave birth to a girl-child in the night and they sought fire of the neighbours.[1] So the Hireling went in quest of fire. Now there was in the camp a Divineress,[2] and she questioned him of the new-born child, an it was male or female. Quoth he, "'Tis a girl"; and quoth she, "That girl will whore

1 The fire was intended to defend the mother and babe from Jinns, bad spirits, the evil eye, etc. Romans lit candles in the room of the puerpara; hence the goddess Candelifera, and the term Candelaria applied to the B.V. In Brand's Popular Antiquities (ii. 144) we find "Gregory mentions an ordinary superstition of the old wives who dare not trust a child in a cradle by itself alone without a candle"; this was for fear of the "night-hag" (Milton, P. L., ii. 662). The same idea prevailed in Scotland and in Germany: see the learned Liebrecht (who translated the Pentamerone) "Zur Folkskunde," p. 31. In Sweden, if the candle go out, the child may be carried off by the Trolls (Weckenstedt, Wendische Sagen, p. 446) The custom has been traced to the Malay peninsula, whither it was probably imported by the Hindus or the Moslems, and amongst the Tajiks in Bokhara For the Hindu practice, see Katha S S. 305, and Prof. Tawney's learned note analysed above.

2 Arab. "Káhinah," fem. of Káhin (Cohen): see Kahánah, vol. i. night i.

with an hundred men, and a hireling shall wed her and a spider shall slay her." When the hired man heard this, he returned upon his steps and going in to the woman, took the child from her by wily management and slit its maw: then he fled forth into the wold at hap-hazard, and abode in strangerhood while Allah so willed.[1] He gained much money; and, returning to his own land, after twenty years' absence, alighted in the neighbourhood of an old woman, whom he wheedled and treated with liberality, requiring of her a young person whom he might enjoy without marriage. Said she, "I know none but a certain fair woman, who is renowned for this industry." Then she described her charms to him and made him lust after her, and he said, "Hasten to her this minute and lavish upon her whatso she asketh." So the crone betook herself to the girl and discovered his wishes to her, and invited her to him; but she answered, "'Tis true that I was in habit of whoredom, but now I have repented to Almighty Allah, and have no more longing to this: nay, I desire lawful wedlock; so, if he be content with that which is legal, I am between his hands.[2]" The old woman returned to the man and told him what the damsel said; and he lusted after her, because of her beauty and her penitence; so he took her to wife, and when he went in to her, he loved her and after like fashion she loved him. Thus they abode a great while, till one day he questioned her of the cause of a scar[3] he espied on her body, and she said, "I wot naught thereof save that my mother told me a marvellous thing concerning it." Asked he, "What was that?" and she answered, "My mother declared that she gave birth to me one night of the wintry nights, and despatched a hired man, who was with us, in quest of fire for her. He was absent a little while and presently returning, took me and slit my maw and fled. When my mother saw this, chagrin seized her and compassion possessed her; so she sewed up my stomach and nursed me till the wound healed by the ordinance of Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!)." When her husband heard this, he said to her, "What is thy name and what may be the name of thy mother and who may be thy father?" She told him their names and her own, whereby he knew that it was she whose maw he had slit and said to her, "And where are thy mother and father?" "They are both

1 *i.e.*, for a long time, as has been before explained.

2 *i.e.*, at his service. Arabia was well provided with Hetairæ and public women long before the days of Al-Islam.

3 Arab. "Athar" = sign, mark, trail.

dead." "I am that Hireling who slit thy stomach." "Why didst thou that?" "Because of a saying I heard from the wise woman." "What was it?" "She declared thou wouldst play the whore with an hundred men, and that I after that should wed thee." "Ay, I have whored with an hundred men, no more and no less, and behold, thou hast married me." "The Divineress also foresaid that thou shouldst die, at the last of thy life, of the bite of a spider. Indeed, her saying hath been verified of the fornication and the marriage, and I fear lest her word come true no less in the death." Then they betook themselves to a place without the city, where he builded him a mansion of solid stone and white stucco, and stopped its inner walls and plastered them; leaving not therein or cranny or crevice, and he set in it two slave-girls whose services were sweeping and wiping, for fear of spiders. Here he abode with his wife a great while, till one day the man espied a spider on the ceiling and beat it down. When his wife saw it, she said, "This is that which the wise woman foresaid would slay me; so, by thy life, suffer me to kill it with mine own hand." Her husband forbade her from this, but she conjured him to let her destroy the spider; then, of her fearfulness and her eagerness, she took a piece of wood and smote it. The wood brake of the force of the blow, and a splinter from it entered her hand and wrought upon it, so that it swelled. Then her fore-arm also swelled and the swelling spread to her side and thence grew till it reached her heart and she died. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this stranger or more wondrous than the story of the Weaver who became a Leach by commandment of his wife." When the King heard this, his admiration redoubled and he said, "In very truth, Destiny is written to all creatures, and I will not accept aught that is said against my Minister the loyal counsellor." And he bade him hie to his home.

The Twentieth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade summon his Minister and he presented himself before him, whereupon he required of him the hearing of the story. So the Wazir said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O King, to

THE TALE OF THE WEAVER WHO BECAME A LEACH BY ORDER OF HIS WIFE.[1]

There was once, in the land of Fars,[1] a man who wedded a woman higher than himself in rank and nobler of lineage, but she had no guardian to preserve her from want. She loathed to marry one who was beneath her; yet she wived with him because of need, and took of him a bond in writing to the effect that he would ever be under her order to bid and forbid, and would never thwart her in word or in deed. Now the man was a Weaver and he bound himself in writing to pay his wife ten thousand dirhams in case of default. After such fashion they abode a long while till one day the wife went out to fetch water, of which she had need, and saw a leach who had spread a carpet hard by the road, whereon he had set out great store of simples[2] and implements of medicine, and he was speaking and muttering charms, whilst the folk flocked to him from all quarters and girt him about on every side. The Weaver's wife marvelled at the largeness of the physician's fortune[3] and said in herself, "Were my husband thus, he would lead an easy life and that wherein we are of straitness and poverty would be widened to him." Then she returned home, cark-full and care-full; and when her husband saw her in this condition, he questioned her of her case and she said to him, "Verily, my breast is narrowed by reason of thee and of the very goodness of thine intent," presently adding, "Narrow means suit me not, and thou in thy present craft gainest naught; so either do thou seek out a business other than this or pay me my rightful due[4] and let me wend my ways." Her husband chid her for this and advised her to take patience; but she would not be turned from her design and said to him, "Go forth and watch yonder physician how he doth and learn from him what he saith." Said he, "Let not thy heart be troubled," and added, "I will go every day to the session of the leach." So he began resorting daily to the physician and committing to memory his answers and that

1 *i.e.*, Persia. See vol. iii. ccclxviii.

2 Arab. "'Akákir" plur. of 'Akkár prop. = aromatic roots; but applied to vulgar drugs or simples, as in the Tale of the Sage Duban, vol. i. night iv.

3 Arab. "Si'at rizki-h," *i.e.*, the ease with which he earned his copious livelihood.

4 *i.e.*, the ten thousand dirhams of the bond, beside the unpaid and contingent portion of her "Mahr" or marriage-settlement.

which he spoke of jargon,[1] till he had gotten a great matter by rote, and all this he learned and thoroughly digested it. Then he returned to his wife and said to her, "I have stored up the physician's sayings in memory, and have mastered his manner of muttering and diagnoses and prescribing remedies, and I wot by heart the names of the medicines[2] and of all the diseases, and there abideth of thy bidding naught undone: so what dost thou command me now to do?" Quoth she, "Leave the loom and open thyself a leach's shop"; but quoth he, "My fellow-townsmen know me and this affair will not profit me, save in a land of strangerhood; so come, let us go out from this city and get us to a foreign land and there live." And she said, "Do whatso thou willest." Accordingly, he arose and taking his weaving gear, sold it and bought with the price drugs and simples and wrought himself a carpet, with which they set out and journeyed to a certain village, where they took up their abode. Then the man fell to going round about the hamlets and villages and outskirts of towns, after donning leach's dress; and he began to earn his livelihood and make much gain. Their affairs prospered and their circumstances were bettered; wherefore they praised Allah for their present ease, and the village became to them a home. In this way he lived for a long time, but at length he wandered anew,[3] and the days and the nights ceased not to transport him from country to country, till he came to the land of the Roum and lighted down in a city of the cities thereof, wherein was Jálínús[4] the Sage; but the Weaver knew him not, nor was aware who he was. So he fared forth, as was his wont, in quest of a place where the folk might be gathered together, and hired the courtyard[5] of Jalinus. There he spread his carpet and setting out on it his simples and instruments of medicine, praised himself and his skill and claimed a cleverness such as none but he might claim.[6] Jalinus heard that which

1 Arab. "Al-Házúr" from Hazr = loquacity, frivolous garrulity. Every craft in the East has a jargon of its own, and the goldsmith (Zargar) is famed for speaking a language made unintelligible by the constant insertion of a letter or letters not belonging to the word. It is as if we rapidly pronounced How d'ye do = Howth doth yeth doth?

2 Arab. "Asmá al-Adwiyah," such as are contained in volumes like the "Alfáz al-Adwiyah" (Nomenclature of Drugs).

3 I am compelled to insert a line in order to make sense.

4 "Galen," who is considered by Moslems as a kind of pre-Islamitic Saint; and whom Rabelais (iii. c. 7) calls Le gentil Falot Galen, is explained by Eustathius as the Serene Γαληνὸς from γελάω = rideo.

5 Arab. "Sáhah" the clear space before the house as opposed to the "Bathah" (Span. *Patio*), the inner court.

6 A naive description of the naïve style of *réclame* adopted by the Eastern Bob Sawyer.

he affirmed of his understanding, and it was certified unto him and established in his mind that the man was a skilled leach of the leaches of the Persians and he said in himself, "Unless he had confidence in his knowledge and were minded to confront me and contend with me, he had not sought the door of my house neither had he spoken that which he hath spoken." And care and doubt gat hold upon Jalinus: so he drew near the Weaver and addressed himself to see how his doings should end, whilst the folk began to flock to him and describe to him their ailments,[1] and he would answer them thereof, hitting the mark one while and missing it another while, so that naught appeared to Jalinus of his fashion whereby his mind might be assured that he had justly estimated his skill. Presently, up came a woman with a urinal,[2] and when the Weaver saw the phial afar off, he said to her, "This is the water of a man, a stranger." Said she, "Yes"; and he continued, "Is he not a Jew and is not his ailment flatulence?" "Yes," replied the woman, and the folk marvelled at this; wherefore the man was magnified in the eyes of Jalinus, for that he heard speech such as was not of the usage of doctors, seeing that they know not urine but by shaking it and looking straitly thereon, neither wot they a man's water from a woman's water, nor a stranger's from a countryman's, nor a Jew's from a Sharif's.[3] Then the woman asked, "What is the remedy?" and the Weaver answered, "Bring the honorarium.[4]" So she paid him a dirham, and he gave her medicines contrary to that ailment and such as would only aggravate the complaint. When Jalinus saw what appeared to him of the man's incapacity, he turned to his disciples and pupils and bade them fetch the mock doctor, with all his gear and drugs. Accordingly they brought him into his presence without stay or delay, and when Jalinus saw him before him, he asked him, "Knowest thou me?" and the other answered, "No, nor did I ever set eyes on thee before this day." Quoth the Sage, "Dost thou know Jalinus?" and quoth the Weaver, "No." Then said Jalinus, "What drave thee to do that which thou dost?" So he acquainted him with his adventure,

1 Which they habitually do, by-the-by, with an immense amount of unpleasant detail. See *Pilgrimage* i. 18

2 The old French name for the phial or bottle in which the patient's water is sent.

3 A descendant from Mohammed, strictly through his grandson Husayn. See vol. iii. night cccii.

4 Arab. "Al-Futúh" lit. the victories; a euphemistic term for what is submitted to the "musculus guineaorum."

especially with the dowry and the obligation by which he was bound with regard to his wife whereat the Sage marvelled and certified himself anent the matter of the marriage-settlement. Then he bade lodge him near himself and entreated him with kindness, and took him apart and said to him, "Expound to me the story of the urine-phial, and whence thou knewest that the water therein was that of a man, and he a stranger and a Jew, and that his ailment was flatulence?" The Weaver replied, "'Tis well. Thou must know that we people of Persia are skilled in physiognomy,[1] and I saw the woman to be rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed and tall-statured. Now these qualities belong to women who are enamoured of a man and are distracted for love of him[2]; moreover, I saw her burning with anxiety; so I knew that the patient was her husband. As for his strangerhood, I noted that the dress of the woman differed from that of the townsfolk, wherefore I knew that she was a foreigner; and in the mouth of the phial I saw a yellow rag,[3] which garred me wot that the sick man was a Jew and she a Jewess. Moreover, she came to me on first day[4]; and 'tis the Jews' custom to take meat-puddings[5] and food that hath passed the night[6] and eat

1 Arab. "Firásah," lit. judging the points of a mare (*faras*). Of physiognomy, or rather judging by externals, curious tales are told by the Aiabs. In Al-Mas'udi (chapt. lvi.) is the original of the camel blind of one eye, etc., which the genius of Voltaire has made famous throughout Europe.

2 I here quote Mr. Payne's note. "Sic in the text; but the passage is apparently corrupt. It is not plain why a rosy complexion, blue eyes and tallness, should be peculiar to women in love. Arab women being commonly short, swarthy and black-eyed, the attributes mentioned appear rather to denote the foreign origin of the woman; and it is probable, therefore, that this passage has by a copyist's error been mixed up with that which relates to the signs by which the mock physician recognised her strangerhood, the clause specifying the symptoms of her love-lorn condition having been crowded out in the process, an accident of no unfrequent occurrence in the transcription of Oriental works."

3 The sumptuary laws, compelling for instance the Jews to wear yellow turbands, and the Christians to carry girdles date from the Capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 636 by Caliph Omar. See vol. i. night viii.; and Terminal Essay § 1.

4 *i.e.*, our Sunday: the Jewish week ending with the Sabbath (Saturday). I have already noted this term for Saturn's day, established as a God's rest by Commandment No. iv. How it lost its honours amongst Christians none can say: the text in Col. ii. 16, 17, is insufficient to abolish an order given with such pomp and circumstance to, and obeyed so strictly and universally by, the Hebrews, including the Founder of Christianity. The general idea is that the Jewish Sabbath was done away with by the Christian dispensation (although Jesus kept it with the usual scrupulous care), and that sundry of the Councils at Colossæ and Laodicea anathematised those who observed the Saturday after Israelitish fashion.

5 Haráis plur. of Harísah: see vol. i. night xiii.

6 It would have been cooked on our Thursday night, or the Jewish Friday night, and would be stale and indigestible on the next day.

them on the Saturday their Sabbath, hot and cold, and they exceed in eating; wherefore flatulence and indigestion betide them. Thus I was directed and guessed that which thou hast heard." Now when Jalinus heard this, he ordered the Weaver the amount of his wife's dowry, and bade him pay it to her and said to him, "Divorce her." Furthermore, he forbade him from returning to the practice of physic, and warned him never again to take to wife a woman of rank higher than his own; and he gave him his spending-money and charged him return to his proper craft. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this tale stranger or rarer than the story of the Two Sharpers who each cozened his Compeer." When King Shah Bakht heard this, he said to himself, "How like is this story to my present case with this Minister, who hath not his like!" Then he bade him hie to his own house and come again at eventide.

The Twenty-first Night of the Month.

WHENAS nighted the night, the Wazir presented himself before the King, who bade him relate the promised story. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O King, to

THE TALE OF THE TWO SHARPERS WHO EACH COZENED HIS COMPEER."

There was once, in the city of Baghdad, a man hight Al-Marwazí,[1] who was a sharper and ruined the folk with his rogueries, and he was renowned in all quarters for knavery. He went out one day, carrying a load of sheep's droppings, and sware to himself that he would not return to his lodging till he had sold it at the price of raisins. Now there was in another city a second sharper, hight Al-Rází,[2] one of its worst, who went out the

1 Marw (Margiana), which the Turkomans pronounce "Mawr," is derived by Bournouf from the Sansk. Maru or Marw; and by Sir H. Rawlinson from Marz or Marj, the Lat. Margo; Germ. Mark; English March; Old French Marche and Neo-Lat. Marca. So Marzbán, a Warden of the Marches: vol. iii night cxciii. The adj. is not Marázi, as stated in vol. iii. night clxxvi.; but Marwazi, for which see Ibn Khallikan, vol. i. p. 7, etc.: yet there are good writers who use "Marázi" as Rázi for a native of Rayy.

2 *i.e.*, native of Rayy city. See vol. iii. night cclxxii.

same day, bearing a load of goat's droppings,[1] anent which he had sworn to himself that he would not sell it but at the price of sun-dried figs. So the twain fared on with that which was by them and ceased not going till they met in one of the khans[2] and one complained to other of what he had suffered on travel in quest of gain and of the little demand for his wares. Now each of them had it in mind to cheat his fellow; so the man of Marw said to the man of Rayy, "Wilt thou sell me that?" He said, "Yes," and the other continued, "And wilt thou buy that which is with me?" The man of Rayy consented; so they agreed upon this and each of them sold to his mate that which was with him in exchange for the other's; after which they bade farewell and both fared forth. As soon as the twain were out of sight, they examined their loads, to see what was therein, and one of them found that he had a load of sheep's droppings and the other that he had a load of goat's droppings; whereupon each of them turned back in quest of his fellow. They met again in the khan and laughing at each other cancelled their bargain; then they agreed to enter into partnership and that all all they had of money and other good should be in common, share and share alike. Then quoth Al-Razi to Al-Marwazi, "Come with me to my city, for that 'tis nearer than thine." So he went with him, and when he arrived at his quarters, he said to his wife and household and neighbours, "This is my brother, who hath been absent in the land of Khorasan and is come back." And he abode with him in all honour for a space of three days. On the fourth day, Al-Razi said to him, "Know, O my brother, that I purpose to do something." The other asked, "What is it?" and the first answered, "I mean to feign myself dead and do thou go to the bazar and hire two porters and a bier. Then take me up and go about the streets and markets with my body and collect alms on my account.[3]" Accordingly the Marw man

1 Normally used for fuel. The tale will remind old Anglo-Indians of the two Bengal officers who were great at such "sells," and who "swopped" a spavined horse for a broken-down "buggy."

2 In the text "khanádik," ditches, trenches; probably (as Mr. Payne suggests) a clerical or typographical error for "Fanádik," inns or caravanserais; the plural of "Funduk" (Span. Fonda), for which see vol. vi. night dcccxlv.

3 This sentence is supplied by Mr. Payne to remedy the incoherence of the text. Moslems are bound to see True Believers decently buried, and the poor often beg alms for the funeral. Here the tale resembles the opening of Hajji Baba by Mr. Morier, that admirable picture of Persian manners and morals.

repaired to the market and, fetching that which he sought, returned to the Rayy man's house, where he found his fellow cast down in the entrance-passage, with his beard tied and his eyes shut, and his complexion was paled and his belly was blown and his limbs were loose. So he deemed him really dead and shook him but he spoke not; then he took a knife and pricked his feet, but he budged not. Presently said Al-Razi, "What is this, O fool?" and said Al-Marwazi, "I deemed thou wast dead in very deed." Al-Razi cried, "Get thee to business, and leave funning." So he took him up and went with him to the market and collected alms for him that day till eventide, when he bore him back to his abode and waited till the morrow. Next morning, he again took up the bier and walked round with it as before, in quest of charity. Presently, the Chief of Police, who was of those who had given him alms on the previous day, met him; so he was angered and fell on the porters and beat them and took the dead body, saying, "I will bury him and win reward in Heaven.[1]" So his followers took him up and carrying him to the Police-officer, fetched grave-diggers, who dug him a grave. Then they brought him a shroud and perfumes[2] and fetched an old man of the quarter to wash him: so the Shaykh recited over him the appointed prayers[3] and laying him on the bench, washed him and shrouded him. After he had been shrouded he befouled himself[4]; so the grey beard renewed the washing and went away to make the Wuzu-ablution, whilst all the folk departed to do likewise, before the orisons of the funeral. When the dead man found himself alone, he sprang up, as he were a Satan; and, donning the corpse-washer's dress,[5] took the cups and water-can[6] and wrapped them up in napkins; then he clapped his shroud under his arm-pit and went out. The doorkeepers thought that he was the washer and

1 Arab. "Al-ajr," which has often occurred.

2 Arab. "Hanút," *i.e.*, leaves of the lotus-tree to be infused as a wash for the corpse; camphor used with cotton to close the mouth and other orifices; and, in the case of a wealthy man, rose-water, musk, ambergris, sandal-wood, and lign-aloes for fumigation.

3 Which always begin with four "Takbírs" and differ in many points from the usual orisons. See Lane (M. E. chapt xxviii.) who is, however, very superficial upon an intricate and interesting subject. He even neglects to mention the number of Ruk'át (bows) usual at Cairo and the absence of prostration (sujúd) for which see vol. i. night xxxv.

4 Thus requiring all the ablutional offices to be repeated. The Shaykh, by handling the corpse, became ceremonially impure and required "Wuzu" before he could pray either at home or in the Mosque.

5 The Shaykh had left it when he went out to perform Wuzu.

6 Arab. "Satl." = the Lat. and Etruscan "Situla" and "Situlus," a water-pot.

asked him, "Hast thou made an end of the washing, so we may acquaint the Emir?" The sharper answered, "Yes," and made off to his abode, where he found the Marw man a-wooing his wife and saying to her, "By thy life, thou wilt never again look upon his face for the best reason that by this time he is buried: I myself escaped not from them but after toil and trouble, and if he speak, they will do him to death." Quoth she, "And what wouldst thou have of me?" and quoth he, "Satisfy my desire and heal my disorder, for I am better than thy husband." And he began toying with her as a prelude to possession. Now when the Rayy man heard this, he said, "Yonder wittol-pimp lusteth after my wife; but I will at once do him a damage." Then he rushed in upon them, and when Al-Marwazi saw him, he wondered at him and said to him, "How didst thou make thine escape?" Accordingly he told him the trick he had played, and they abode talking of that which they had collected from the folk, and indeed they had gotten great store of money. Then said the man of Marw, "In very sooth, mine absence hath been prolonged and lief would I return to my own land." Al-Razi said, "As thou willest"; and the other rejoined, "Let us divide the monies we have made and do thou go with me to my home, so I may show thee my tricks and my works." Replied the man of Rayy, "Come to-morrow, and we will divide the coin." So the Marw man went away and the other turned to his wife and said to her, "We have collected us great plenty of money, and the dog would fain take the half of it; but such thing shall never be, for my mind hath been changed against him, since I heard him making love to thee; now, therefore, I propose to play him a trick and enjoy all the money; and do thou not oppose me." She replied, "'Tis well"; and he said to her, "To-morrow, at peep o' day I will feign myself dead, and do thou cry aloud and tear thy hair, whereupon the folk will flock to me. Then lay me out and bury me; and, when the folk are gone away from the grave, dig down to me and take me; and fear not for me, as I can abide without harm two days in the tomb-niche.[1]" Whereto she made answer, "Do e'en whatso thou wilt." Accordingly, when it was the dawn-hour, she bound his beard and spreading a veil over him, shrieked aloud, whereupon the people of the quarter flocked to her, men and women. Presently, up came Al-Marwazi, for the division of the money, and hearing the keening asked,

1 Arab. "Lahd, Luhd," the niche or cell hollowed out in the side of the oblong trench: here the corpse is deposited and covered with palm-fronds, etc., to prevent the earth touching it. See my Pilgrimage ii. 304.

"What may be the news?" Quoth they, "Thy brother is dead"; and quoth he in himself, "The accursed fellow cozeneth me, so he may get all the coin for himself, but I will presently do with him what shall soon re-quicken him." Then he tare the bosom of his robe and bared his head, weeping and saying, "Alas, my brother, ah! Alas, my chief, ah! Alas, my lord, ah!" And he went in to the men, who rose and condoled with him. Then he accosted the Rayy man's wife and said to her, "How came his death to occur?" Said she, "I know nothing except that, when I arose in the morning, I found him dead." Moreover, he questioned her of the money which was with her, but she cried, "I have no knowledge of this and no tidings." So he sat down at his fellow-sharper's head, and said to him, "Know, O Razi, that I will not leave thee till after ten days with their nights, wherein I will wake and sleep by thy grave. So rise and don't be a fool." But he answered him not, and the man of Marw drew his knife and fell to sticking it into the other's hands and feet, purposing to make him move; but he stirred not and he presently grew weary of this and determined that the sharper was really dead. However, he still had his suspicions and said to himself, "This fellow is falsing me, so he may enjoy all the money." Therewith he began to prepare the body for burial and bought for it perfumes and whatso was needed. Then they brought him to the washing-place and Al-Marwazi came to him; and, heating water till it boiled and bubbled, and a third of it was evaporated, fell to pouring it on his skin, so that it turned bright red and lively blue and was blistered; but he abode still on one case.[1] Presently they wrapped him in the shroud and set him on the bier, which they took up and bearing him to the burial-place, placed him in the grave-niche and filled in the earth; after which the folk dispersed. But the Marw man and the widow abode by the tomb, weeping, and ceased not sitting till sundown, when the woman said to him, "Come, let us hie us home, for this weeping will not profit us, nor will it restore the dead." He replied to her, "By Allah, I will not budge hence till I have slept and waked by this tomb ten days with their nights!" When she heard this his speech, she feared lest he should keep his word and his oath, and so her husband perish; but she said in her mind, "This one dissembleth: an I leave him and return to my house, he will tarry by him a little while

1 For the incredible amount of torture which Eastern obstinacy will sometimes endure, see Al-Mas'udi's tale of the miserable little old man who stole the ten purses, vol. vi night dcccxxxiv.

and go away." And Al-Marwazi said to her, "Arise, thou, and hie thee home." So she arose and repaired to her house, whilst the man of Marw abode in his place till the night was half spent, when he said to himself, "How long? Yet how can I let this knavish dog die and lose the money? Better I open the tomb on him and bring him forth and take my due of him by dint of grievous beating and torment." Accordingly, he dug him up and pulled him forth of the grave; after which he betook himself to a garden hard by the burial-ground, and cut thence staves and palm-fronds.[1] Then he tied the dead man's legs and laid on to him with the staff and beat him a grievous beating; but the body never budged. When the time grew longsome on him, his shoulders became a-weary, and he feared lest some one of the watch passing on his round should surprise and seize him. So he took up Al-Razi and carrying him forth of the cemetery, stayed not till he came to the Magians' mortuary-place and casting him down in a Tower of Silence,[2] rained heavy blows upon him till his shoulders failed him, but the other stirred not. Then he seated him by his side and rested; after which he rose and renewed the beating upon him; and thus he did till the end of the night, but without making him move. Now, as Destiny decreed, a band of robbers whose wont it was, when they had stolen anything, to resort to that place and there divide their loot, came thither in early-dawn, according to their custom; they numbered ten and they had with them much wealth which they were carrying. When they approached the Tower of Silence, they heard a noise of blows within it and their captain cried, "This is a Magian whom the Angels[3] are tormenting." So they entered the cemetery, and as soon as they arrived over against him, the man of Marw feared lest they should be the watchmen come upon him,

1 Arab. "Jaridah" (whence the Jarid-game) a palm-frond stripped of its leaves and used for a host of purposes besides flogging, chairs, sofas, bedsteads, cages, etc., etc. Tales of heroism in "eating stick" are always highly relished by the lower orders of Egyptians, who pride themselves upon preferring the severest bastinado to paying the smallest amount of "rint."

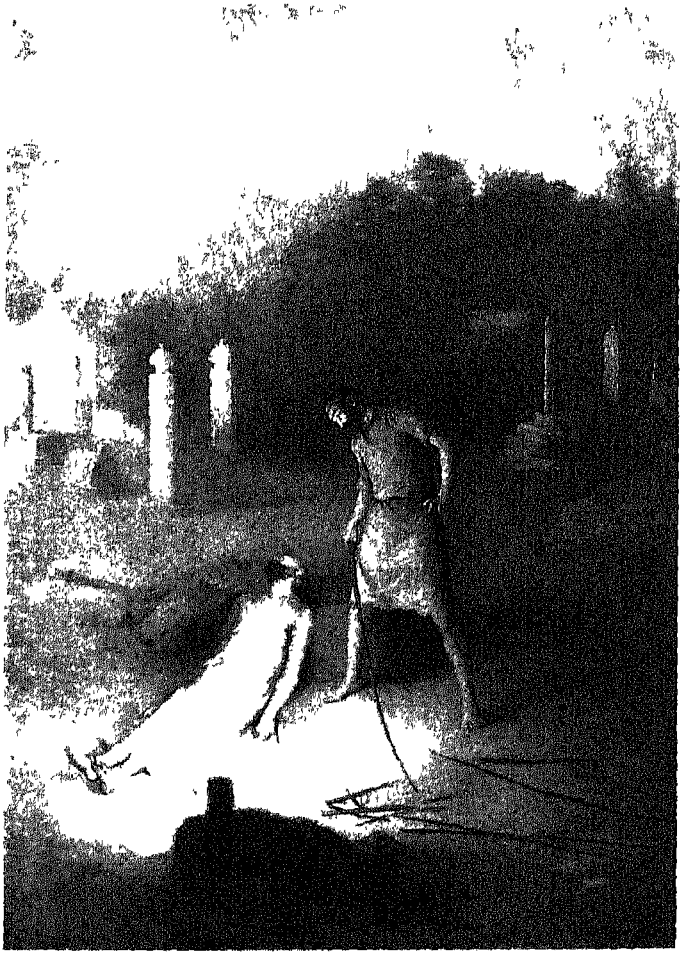
2 Arab. "Náwús," the hollow tower of masonry with a grating over the central well upon which the Magian corpse is placed to be torn by birds of prey: it is kept up by the Parsi population of Bombay and is known to Europeans as the "Tower of Silence." Náis and Náwús also mean a Pyrethrum, a fire-temple, and have a whimsical resemblance to the Greek Naós.

3 For Munkar and Nakir, the Interrogating Angels, see vol. iv. night cccci. According to Al-Mas'udi (chapt. xxxi.) these names were given by the Egyptians to the thirteenth and fourteenth cubits marked on the Nilometer which, in his day, was expected to show seventeen.

No. 59.

The Tale of the Two Sharpers who each Cozened his Compeer.

"Accordingly, he dug him up and pulled him forth of the grave. . . . Then he tied the dead man's legs and laid on to him with the staff and beat him a grievous beating; but the body never budged."



therefore he fled and stood among the tombs.[1] The robbers advanced to the place and finding the man of Rayy bound by the feet and by him some seventy sticks, wondered at this with exceeding wonder, and said, "Allah confound thee! This was a miscreant, a man of many crimes; for earth hath rejected him from her womb, and by my life, he is yet fresh! This is his first night in the tomb, and the Angels were tormenting him but now; so whoso of you hath a sin upon his soul, let him beat him, by way of offering to Almighty Allah." The robbers said, "We be sinners one and all"; so each of them went up to the corpse and dealt it about one hundred blows, one saying the while, "This is for my father[2]!" and another laid on to him crying, "This is for my grandfather!" whilst a third muttered, "This is for my brother!" and a fourth exclaimed, "This is for my mother!" And they gave not taking turns at him and beating him till they were weary, whilst Al-Marwazi stood laughing and saying in himself, "'Tis not I alone who have entered into default against him. There is no Majesty and there is no might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great[3]!" Then the robbers applied themselves to sharing their loot wherein was a sword which caused them to fall out anent the man who should take it. Quoth the Captain, "'Tis my rede that we make proof of it; so, an it be a fine blade, we shall know its worth, and if it be worthless we shall know that"; whereto they said, "Try it on this corpse, for it is fresh." So the Captain took the sword and drawing it, brandished and made a false cut with it; but, when the man of Rayy saw this, he felt sure of death and said in his mind, "I have borne the washing-slab and the boiling water and the pricking with the knife-point and the grave-niche and its straitness and all this, trusting in Allah that I might be delivered from death, and indeed I have been delivered; but the sword I may not suffer, seeing that one stroke of it will make me a dead man." So saying, he sprang to his feet, and, seizing a thigh-bone of one departed, shouted at the top of his voice, "O ye dead ones, take them to yourselves!" And he smote one of them, whilst his

1 The text (xi. 227) has "Tannúr" = an oven, evidently a misprint for "Kubúr" = tombs.

2 Arab "'An Abí" = (a propitiatory offering) for my father. So in Marocco the "Powder-players" dedicate a shot to a special purpose or person, crying, "To my sweetheart!" "To my dead!" "To my horse!" etc.

3 For this formula see vol. i. night vii. It is technically called "Haukalah" and "Haulakah," words in the third conjugation of increased triliterals, corresponding with the quadriliteral radicals and possessing the peculiar power of Kasr = abbreviation. Of this same class is Basmalah (vol. iv. night cccexliii.; vol. vi. night dccclxxxix).

mate of Marw smote another and they cried out at them and buffeted them on their neck-napes: whereupon the robbers left that which was with them of loot and ran away; and indeed their wits took flight for terror, and they ceased not running till they came forth of the Magians' mortuary-ground and left it a parasang's length behind them, when they halted, trembling and affrighted for the muchness of that which had befallen them of fear and awe of the dead.[1] As for Al-Razi and Al-Marwazi, they made peace each with other and sat down to share the spoil. Quoth the man of Marw, "I will not give thee a dirham of this money, till thou pay me my due of the monies that be in thy house." And quoth the man of Rayy, "I will do naught of the kind,[2] nor will I withdraw this from aught of my due." So they fell out thereupon, and disputed each with other and either of the twain went saying to his fellow, "I will not give thee a dirham!" Wherefore words ran high between them and the brawl was prolonged. Meanwhile, when the robbers halted, one of them said to the others, "Let us go back and see"; and the Captain said, "This thing is impossible of the dead: never heard we that they came to life in such way. Return we and take our monies, for that the dead have no need of money." And they were divided in opinion as to returning; but presently one said, "Indeed, our weapons are gone and we may not prevail against them and will not draw near the place; only let one of us go look at it, and if he hear no sound of them, let him suggest to us what we shall do." At this they agreed that they should send a man of them and assigned him for such mission two parts of the plunder. Accordingly, he returned to the burial-ground and gave not over going till he stood at the door of the Tower of Silence, when he heard the words of Al-Marwazi to his fellow, "I will not give thee a single dirham of the money!" The other said the same and they were occupied with brawling and abuse and talk. So the robber returned in haste to his mates, who said, "What is behind thee[3]?" Quoth he, "Get you gone and run for your lives, O fools, and save yourselves: much people of the dead are come to life and between them are words and brawls."

1 This scene with the watch would be relished in the coffee-house, where the tricks of robbers, like a gird at the police, are always acceptable.

2 Arab. "Lá af'al"; more commonly Má af'al. Má and Lá are synonymous negative particles, differing, however, in application. Má (Gr. μὴ) precedes definites, or indefinites: Lá and Lam (Gr. οὔ) only indefinites as "Lá iláha," etc.

3 Alluding to the proverb, "What hast thou left behind thee, O Asám?" *i.e.*, what didst thou see?

Hereat the robbers fled, whilst the two sharpers returned to the man of Rayy's house and made peace, and added the robbers' spoil to the monies they had gained and lived a length of time. "Nor, O king of the age" (continued the Wazir), "is this stranger or rarer than the story of the Four Sharpers with the Shroff and the Ass." When the king heard this story, he smiled and it pleased him and he bade the Minister to his own house.

The Twenty-Second Night of the Month.

WHEN the evening evened, King Shah Bakht summoned the Wazir and required of him the hearing of the story. So Al-Rahwan said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O King, to

THE TALE OF THE SHARPERS WITH THE SHROFF[1] *AND THE ASS.*"

Four sharpers once plotted against a Shroff, a man of much wealth, and agreed upon a sleight for securing some of his coins. So one of them took an ass and laying on it a bag, wherein were dirhams, lighted down at the shop of the Shroff and sought of him small change. The man of monies brought out to him the silver bits and bartered them with him, whilst the sharper was easy with him in the matter of the exchange, so he might gar him long for more gain. As they were thus, up came the other three sharpers and surrounded the donkey; and one of them said, "'Tis he," and another said, "Wait till I look at him Then he took to considering the ass and stroking him from ere to tail; whilst the third went up to him and handled him and him from head to rump, saying, "Yes, 'tis in him." another, "No, 'tis not in him"; and they left not doing the like of this for some time. Then they accosted the donkey's owner and chaffered with him and he said, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." They offered him a thousand dirhams; but he refused and swore that he would not vend the ass but for that which he had said. They ceased not adding to their offer till the price reached five thousand dirhams, whilst their mate still said, "I'll not vend him save for ten thousand silver pieces." The Shroff advised him to sell, but he would not do this and said to him, "Ho, shaykh! Thou wottest not the

1 Arab. "Sayrafi," s. as "Sarráf": see vol. i. night xxi.
2 Arab. "Al-Ma'rafah" = the place where the mane grows.

case of this donkey. Stick to silver and gold, and what pertaineth thereto of exchange and small change; because indeed the virtue of this ass is a mystery to thee. For every craft its crafty men, and for every means of livelihood its peculiar people." When the affair was prolonged upon the three sharpers, they went away and sat down aside; then they came up privily to the money-changer and said to him, "An thou can buy him for us, do so, and we will give thee twenty dirhams." Quoth he, "Go away and sit down at a distance from him." So they did as he bade, and the Shroff went up to the owner of the ass and ceased not luring him with lucre and saying, "Leave these wights and sell me the donkey, and I will reckon him a present from thee," till he sold him the animal for five thousand and five hundred dirhams. Accordingly, the money-changer weighed out to him that sum of his own monies, and the owner of the ass took the price and delivered the beast to him, saying, "Whatso shall betide, though he abide a deposit upon thy neck[1] sell him not to yonder cheats for less than ten thousand dirhams, for that they would fain buy him because of a hidden hoard they know whereto naught can guide them save this donkey. So close thy hand on him and cross me not, or thou shalt repent." With these words he left him and went away, whereupon up came the three other sharpers, the comrades of him of the ass, and said to the Shroff, "God requite thee for us with good, in that thou hast bought him! How can we reward thee?" Quoth he, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." When they heard that they returned to the ass and fell again to examining him like buyers, and handling him. Then said they to the money-changer, "Indeed we were deceived in him. This is not the ass we sought and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs.[2]" Then they left him and offered to go away, whereat the Shroff was sore chagrined and cried out at their speech, saying, "O folk, ye asked me to buy him for you and now I have bought him, ye say, we were deceived in him, and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs." They replied, "We thought that in him was whatso we wanted; but, behold, in him is the contrary of that which we wish; and indeed he hath a blemish, for that he is short of back." Then they made long noses[3] at him and went away from him and dispersed. The money-changer deemed they did but

1 *i.e.*, though the ass remain on thy hands.
2 "Halves," *i.e.*, of dirhams: see vol. i. night xxxviii.
3 Arab. "Taannafú" = the Germ. lange Nase.

play him off, that they might get the donkey at their own price; but, when they walked away from him and he had long awaited their return, he cried out, saying, "Well-away!" and "Ruin!" and "Sorry case I am in!" and shrieked aloud and rent his raiment. So the market-people assembled to him and questioned him of his case; whereupon he acquainted them with his condition and told them what the knaves had said and how they had cozened him and how they had cajoled him into buying an ass worth fifty dirhams[1] for five thousand and five hundred.[2] His friends blamed him and a gathering of the folk laughed at him and admired his folly and over-faith in believing the talk of the sharpers without suspicion, and meddling with that which he understood not, and thrusting himself into that whereof he had no sure knowledge. "On this wise,'O King Shah Bakht" (continued the Wazir), "is the issue of greed for the goods of the world, and indeed coveting that which our knowledge containeth not shall lead to ruin and repentance. Nor, O King of the age" (added he), "is this story stranger than that of the Cheat and the Merchants." When the King heard these words, he said in himself, "Indeed, had I given ear to the sayings of my courtiers and inclined to their idle prate in the matter of my Minister, I had repented to the uttermost of penitence, but Alhamdolillah—laud be to the Lord!—who hath disposed me to endurance and long-suffering and hath vouchsafed to me patience!" Then he turned to the Wazir and dismissed him to his dwelling and gave congé those who were present, according to his custom.

The Twenty-Third Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister and when he presented himself before him, he required of him the hearing of the story. So he said, "Hearing and obeying. Give ear, O illustrious lord, to

THE TALE OF THE CHEAT AND THE MERCHANTS.

There was once in olden time a certain Cheat, who could turn the ear inside out by his talk, and he was a model of cleverness and quick wit and skill and mischief. It was his wont

1 About forty shillings.
2 About £220.

to enter a town and make a show of being a trader and engage in intimacy with people of worth and sit in session with the merchants, for his name was noted as a man of virtue and piety. Then he would put a sleight on them and take of them what he might spend and fare forth to another stead; and he ceased not to do thus for a while of time. It chanced one day that he entered a certain city and sold somewhat that was with him of merchandise, and made friends of the merchants of the place, and took to sitting with them and entertaining them and inviting them to his quarters and his assembly, whilst they also invited him to their houses. He abode after such fashion a long time until he was minded to quit the city; and this was bruited among his intimates, who grieved for parting from him. Then he betook himself to one of them who was the richest in substance and the most conspicuous for generosity, and sat with him and borrowed his goods; and when rising to depart, he bade him return the deposit that he had left with him. Quoth the merchant, "And what is the deposit?" and quoth the Cheat, "'Tis such a purse, with the thousand dinars therein." The merchant asked, "And when didst thou give me that same?" and the Cheat answered, "Extolled be Allah of All Might! Was it not on such a day, by such a token which is thus and thus?" The man rejoined, "I know naught of this," and words were bandied about between them, whilst the folk who heard them disputed together concerning their sayings and doings, till their voices rose high and the neighbours had knowledge of that which passed between them.[1] Then said the Cheat, "O people, this is my friend and I deposited with him a deposit which he denieth having received: so in whom shall men put trust after this?" And they said, "This person is a man of worth and we have known in him naught but trustiness and good faith and the best of breeding, and he is endowed with sense and manliness.[2] Indeed, he affirmeth no false claim, for that we have

1 Characteristically Eastern and Moslem is this action of the neighbours and bystanders. A walk through any Oriental city will show a crowd of people screaming and gesticulating, with thundering yells and lightning glances, as if about to close in mortal fight, concerning some matter which in no way concerns them. Our European cockneys and *badauds* mostly content themselves with staring and mobbing.

2 Arab. "Muruwwah," lit. manliness, especially in the sense of generosity. So the saying touching the "Miyán," or Moslem of India:—

Fi 'l-ruz kuwwah:
Fi 'l Hindi muruwwah.

When rice have strength, you'll haply find,
In Hindi man, a manly mind.

consorted and associated with him and he with us, and we know the sincerity of his religion." Then quoth one of them to the merchant, "Ho, Such-an-one! Bethink thee of the past and refresh thy memory. It cannot be that thou hast forgotten." But quoth he, "O people, I wot nothing of what he saith, for indeed he deposited naught with me": and the matter was prolonged between them. Then said the Cheat to the merchant, "I am about to travel and I have, praised be Allah Almighty, much wealth, and this money shall not escape me; but do thou make oath to me." And the folk said, "Indeed, this man doth justice upon himself.[1]" Whereupon the merchant fell into that which he disliked,[2] and came nigh upon loss and ill fame. Now he had a friend, who pretended to sharpness and intelligence; so he came up to him secretly and said to him, "Let me do so I may cheat this Cheat, for I know him to be a liar, and thou art near upon having to weigh out the gold; but I will parry off suspicion from thee and say to him, The deposit is with me and thou erredst in suspecting that it was with other than myself; and so I will divert him from thee." The other replied, "Do so, and rid the people of such pretended debts." Accordingly the friend turned to the Cheat, and said to him, "O my lord, I am Such-an-one, and thou goest under a delusion. The purse is with me, for it was with me that thou depositedst it, and this Shaykh is innocent of it." But the Cheat answered him with impatience and impetuosity, saying, "Extolled be Allah! As for the purse that is with thee, O noble and faithful man, I know 'tis under Allah's charge, and my heart is easy anent it, because 'tis with thee as it were with me; but I began by demanding the purse which I deposited with this man, of my knowledge that he coveteth the goods of folk." At this the friend was confounded and put to silence and returned not a reply; and the only result of his meddling was that each of them—merchant and friend—had to pay a thousand gold pieces. So the Cheat took the two thousand dinars and made off; and when he was gone, the merchant said to his friend, the man of pretended sharpness and intelligence, "Ho, Such-an-one! Thou and I are like the Falcon and the Locust." The friend asked, "What was their case?" and the merchant answered with

1 *i.e.*, his claim is just and reasonable.

2 I have noted (vol. i. night xviii.) that good Moslems shun a formal oath, although "by Allah!" is ever on their tongues.

THE STORY OF THE FALCON AND THE LOCUST.[1]

There was once, of old time, a Falcon who made himself a nest hard by the home of a Locust, and his neighbour gloried in such neighbourhood and betaking herself to him, saluted him with the salam and said, "O my lord and lord of all the birds, indeed the nearness to thee delighteth me, and thou honourest me with thy vicinity, and my soul is fortified with thee." The Falcon thanked her for this, and friendship between them followed. One day, the Locust said to the bird, "O prince of the flying race, how is it that I see thee alone, solitary, having with thee no friend of thy kind, the volatiles, on whom thou mayst repose in time of gladness, and of whom thou mayst seek aid in tide of sadness? Indeed, 'tis said:—Man goeth about seeking ease of body and ward of strength, and there is naught in this more necessary to him than a true friend who shall be the crown of his comfort and the column of his career, and on whom shall be his dependence in his distress and in his delight. Now I, although ardently desiring thy weal in that which befitteth thy rank and degree, yet am weak in that which the soul craveth; but, an thou deign give me leave, I will seek out for thee one of the birds who shall fellow thee in body and strength." And the Falcon said, "I commit this to thee and rely upon thee herein." Thereupon, O my brother (quoth the merchant), the Locust began going round the company of the birds, but saw naught resembling the Falcon in bulk and body save the Kite, and thought well of her. So she brought the twain together and counselled the Falcon to foregather with the Kite. Presently it fortuned that the Falcon fell sick and the Kite tarried with and tended him a long while till he recovered, and became sound and strong; wherefore he thanked her and she fared from him. But after some days, the Falcon's sickness returned to him, and he needed succour of the Kite; so the Locust went out from him and was absent from him a day; after which she returned to him with another locust,[2] saying, "I have brought thee this one."

1 Most Arabs believe that the black cloud which sometimes produces, besides famine, contagious fevers and pestilence, like that which in 1799 depopulated the cities and country of Barbary, is led by a king locust, the Sultan Jarád.

2 The text is hopelessly corrupt, and we have no other with which to collate. Apparently a portion of the tale has fallen out, making a *non-sens* of its ending, which suggests that the kite gobbled up the two locusts at her ease, and left the falcon to himself.

When the Falcon saw her, he said, "God requite thee with good! Indeed, thou hast done well in the quest, and thou hast shown subtlety and discrimination in the choice." All this, O my brother (continued the merchant), befell because the Locust had no knowledge of the essence which lurketh in the outer semblance of bodies. As for thee, O my brother (Allah requite thee with weal!), thou wast subtle in device and usedst precaution; but forethought availeth not against Fate, and Fortune foreordained baffleth force of fence. How excellent is the saying of the poet when he spake these couplets[1]:—

It chances whiles that the blind man escapes a pit, * Whilst he who is clear of sight falls into it.
The ignorant man may speak with impunity * A word that is death to the wise and the ripe of wit.
The true believer is pinched for his daily bread, * Whilst infidel rogues enjoy all benefit.
Where is a man's resource and what can he do? * It is the Almighty's will; we must submit.

"Nor" (continued the Wazir) "is this, O king of the age, rarer or stranger than the story of the King and his Chamberlain's wife; nay, this is more wondrous than that and more delectable." When the king heard this story, he was strengthened in his resolve to spare the Minister, and to eschew haste in an affair whereof he was not certified; so he comforted him and bade him hie to his home.

The Twenty-Fourth Night of the Month.

When it was night, the King summoned the Wazir and sought of him the hearing of the story. Al-Rahwan replied, "Hearkening and obedience! Listen, O august sovran, to

THE TALE OF THE KING AND HIS CHAMBERLAIN'S WIFE.[2]"

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a King of the kings of the Persians, who was much addicted to the love of fair women. His courtiers spoke him of the wife of a certain of his Chamberlains, a model of beauty and

1 The lines have occurred in vol. i. night xxv. I quote Mr. Payne.

2 The fabliau is a favourite in the East; this is the third time it has occurred with minor modifications. Of course the original was founded on fact, and the fact was and is by no means uncommon.

loveliness and perfect grace, and this egged him on to go in to her. When she saw him she knew him and said to him, "What urgeth the King to this that he doeth?" and he replied, saying, "Verily, I long for thee with excess of longing, and there is no help but that I enjoy thy favours." And he gave her of wealth that after whose like women lust; but she said, "I cannot do the deed whereof the king speaketh, for fear of my husband"; and she refused herself to him with the most rigorous of refusals, and would not suffer him to win his wish. So the king went out in wrath, and forgot his girdle in the place. Now it chanced that her husband entered immediately after his lord had departed, and saw the girdle and knew it. He was aware of the king's love for women; so quoth he to his wife, "What be this I see with thee?" Quoth she, "I'll tell thee the truth," and recounted to him the occurrence; but he believed her not and suspicion entered his heart. As for the King, he passed that night in care and concern, and when the morning morrowed, he summoned that Chamberlain and made him governor of one of his provinces; then he bade him betake himself thither, purposing, after he should have departed and fared afar, to foregather with his wife. The Chamberlain perceived his project and kenned his intent; so he answered, saying, "To hear is to obey!" presently adding, "I will go and order my affairs and give such injunctions as may be needed for the well-doing of my affairs; then will I go about the sovran's commission." And the King said, "Do this and make haste." So the Chamberlain went about that which he needed and assembling his wife's kinsfolk, said to them, "I am determined to dismiss my wife." They took this ill of him and complained of him and summoning him before the sovereign, sat prosecuting him. Now the King had no knowledge of that which had passed; so he said to the Chamberlain, "Why wilt thou put her away and how can thy soul consent to this, and why takest thou unto thyself a fine and fertile piece of land and presently forsakest it?" Answered the husband, "Allah amend the king! By the Almighty, O my King, I saw therein the trail of the lion and fear to enter that land, lest the lion devour me; and the like of my affair with her is that which befell between the Crone and the Draper's Wife." The king asked, "What is their adventure?" and the Chamberlain answered, "Hear, O king,

THE STORY OF THE CRONE AND THE DRAPER'S WIFE.[1]

There was once a man of the Drapers, who had a beautiful wife, and she was curtained[2] and chaste. A certain young man saw her coming forth of the Hammam and loved her, and his heart was engrossed with her. So he devised for access to her all manner of devices, but availed not to foregather with her; and when he was a-weary and his patience failed for travail and trouble, and his fortitude betrayed and forsook him, and he was at an end of his resources against her, he complained of this to an ill-omened crone,[3] who promised him to bring about union between him and his beloved. He thanked her for this and promised her all manner of *douceurs;* and she said to him, "Hie thee to her husband and buy of him a turband-cloth of fine linen, and let it be of the very best of stuff." So he repaired to the Draper and, buying of him a turband-cloth of lawn, returned and gave it to the old woman, who took it and burned it in two places. Then she donned the dress of a devotee and taking the turband-cloth with her, went to the Draper's house and knocked at the door. When the Draper's wife saw her thus habited as a holy woman, she opened to her and admitted her with kindly reception, and made much of her and welcomed her; so the crone went in to her and conversed with her awhile. Then said she to her, "I want to make the Wuzu-ablution preparatory to prayer.[4]" At these words the wife brought the water and she made the ablution, and standing up to pray, prayed and satisfied herself; and when she had ended her orisons, she left the turband-cloth in the place of prayer and fared forth. Presently, in came the Draper, at the hour of night-devotions, and sitting down in the prayer-place where the old woman had prayed, looked about him and espied the turband. He knew it and suspected foul play; so wrath showed in his face and he was furious with his wife and reviled her, and abode his day and his night without speaking to her, during all which while she knew not the cause of his rage. Then she looked and seeing the

1 This is a rechauffé of "The House with the Belvedere"; see vol. v. night dxcviii.

2 Arab. "Mastúrah" = veiled, well-guarded, confined in the Harem.

3 Arab. "'Ajúz nahs" = an old woman so crafty that she was a calamity to friends and foes.

4 Here, as in many places the text is painfully concise; the crone says only, "The Wuzu for the prayer!"

turband-cloth before him, and noting the traces of burning thereon, understood that his anger was on account of this, and concluded that he was in ill-temper because it was burnt. When the morning morrowed, the Draper went out, still wroth with his wife, and the crone returned to her and found her changed of colour, pale of complexion, dejected and heart-broken. So she questioned her of the cause, and the wife told her how her husband was angered against her on account of the burns in the turband-cloth.[1] Rejoined the old woman, "O my daughter, be not chagrined; for I have a son, a fine-drawer, and he, by thy life, shall fine-draw the holes and restore the turband-cloth as it was." The wife rejoiced in her saying and asked her, "And when shall this be?" The crone answered, "To-morrow, Inshallah—an it please Allah the Most High—I will bring him to thee, at the time of thy husband's going forth from thee, and he shall fine-draw it and depart forthwith." Then she comforted her heart and going away from her, returned to the young man and acquainted him with what had passed. Now when the Draper saw the turband-cloth, he determined to divorce his wife, and waited only till he could collect that which was obligatory on him of the contingent dowry and what not else,[2] for fear of her people. When the crone arose in the morning, she took the young man and carried him into the Draper's house. The wife opened the door to her, and the ill-omened old woman entered with him and said to the lady, "Go, fetch that which thou wouldest have fine-drawn and give it to my son." So saying, she bolted the door on her, whereupon the young man possessed her against her will and did his want of her and went forth. Then cried the crone, "Know that this is my son, and that he loved thee with exceeding love and was like to lose his life for longing after thee; so I devised for thee with this device, and came to thee with this turband-cloth, which is not thy husband's, but my son's. Now have I won to my wish; so do thou trust in me and I will put a sleight on thy husband for setting thee right with him, and thou wilt be subject to me and to him and to my son.[3]" And the wife replied, "'Tis well. Do so." Presently the old woman returned to the lover and said, "Know thou that I have engineered the affair for thee with her; and now we must

1 I have followed Mr. Payne, who supplies this sentence to make the Tale run smoothly.

2 *i.e.*, the half of the marriage-settlement due to the wife on divorcement, and whatever monies he may have borrowed of her.

3 *i.e.*, thou wilt have satisfied us all three.

mend that we have marred. Hie thee and sit with the Draper and mention to him the turband-cloth, saying, "The turband I bought of thee I chanced to burn in two places; so I gave it to a certain old woman, to have fine-drawn, and she took it and went away, and I know not her dwelling-place.[1] When thou seest me pass by, rise and lay hold of me, and demand of me the cloth, to the intent that I may arrange her affair with her spouse and that matters go right with thee in her regard." Accordingly he repaired to the Draper's shop and sat down by him and asked him, "Thou knowest the turband-cloth I bought of thee?" "Yes." "Knowest thou what is come of it?" "No." "After I bought it of thee I fumigated myself[2] and it fortuned that the turband-cloth was burnt in two places; so I gave it to a woman, whose son, they said, was a fine-drawer, and she took it and fared forth with it; and I know not her home." When the Draper heard this, he was startled by the thought that he had suspected his wife wrongfully, and marvelled at the story of the turband-cloth, and his mind was made easy anent her. After a short while, up came the old woman, whereupon the young man sprang to his feet and seizing her, demanded of her the turband-cloth. Said she, "Know that I entered one of the houses and wuzu'd and prayed in the prayer-place[3]; and I forgot the turband-cloth there and went out. Now I weet not the house in which I prayed, nor have I been divinely directed[4] thereto, and I go round about every day till the night, so haply I may light on the dwelling, for I know not its owner." When the Draper heard these words, he said to the old woman, "Verily, Allah restoreth to thee what thing thou hast lost. Be gladdened by good news, for the turband-cloth is with me and in my house.[5]"

1 Here I follow Mr. Payne, who has skilfully fine-drawn the holes in the original text.

2 See vol. vi. night dcclxxiii.; vol. vii. night dccccxi.

3 Arab. "Musallà," which may be either a praying carpet, a pure place in a house, or a small chapel like that near Shiraz which Hafiz immortalised

"Bring, boy, the sup that's in the cup; in highest Heaven man ne'er shall find
Such watery marge as Ruknábád, Musallà's mazes rose entwined."

4 Arab. "Ihtidá," = divine direction to Hudà or salvation. The old bawd was still dressed as a devotee, and keeps up the cant of her caste. No sensible man in the East ever allows a religious old woman to pass his threshold.

5 In this tale "poetical justice" is neglected, but the teller skilfully caused the wife to be ravished and not to be a particeps criminis. The lover escapes scot-free because Moslems, as well as Hindus, hold that the amourist under certain conditions is justified in obtaining his object by fair means or foul. See p 147 of "Early Ideas, a Group of Hindoo Stories," collected and collated by Anaryan [F. F. Arbuthnot]. London, Allens, 1881.

And he arose forthright and handed to her the turband-cloth, as it was, and she handed it to the young man. Then the Draper made peace with his wife, and gave her raiment and jewellery, till she was content and her heart was appeased. When the king heard his Chamberlain's story, he was dazed and amazed and said to him, "Abide on thy service and ear thy field for that the lion entered it, but marred it not, and he will never more return thither.[1]" Then he bestowed on him an honourable robe and made him a costly present; and the man returned to his wife and people, rejoicing, his heart having been set at rest concerning his wife. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "O King of the age, is this rarer or stranger than the story of the beautiful wife, a woman gifted of amorous grace, with the ugly Man, her husband." When King Shah Bakht heard the Minister's speech, he deemed it delectable and it pleased him; so he bade him hie to his house, and there he tarried his day long.

The Twenty-Fifth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned his Wazir and bade him tell the tale. So he said, "'Tis well. Hear, O King,

THE TALE OF THE UGLY MAN AND HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE."

There was once a man of the Arabs who had a number of children, and amongst them a boy, never was seen a fairer than he of favour nor a more complete in comeliness; no, nor a more perfect of prudence. When he came to man's estate, his father married him to his first cousin, the daughter of one of his paternal uncles, and she excelled not in beauty, neither was she laudable for qualities; wherefore she pleased not the youth, but he bore with her for the sake of kinship. One day, he fared forth in quest of certain camels[2] of his which had strayed and hied him on all his day and night till eventide, when he was fain to seek hospitality in an Arab camp. So he alighted at one of the tents of the tribesmen and there came forth to him a man short of stature and foul of favour, who saluted him with

1 This is supplied from the "Tale of the King and his Wazir's Wife," vol. iv. night dlxxviii.

2 Arab. "Ibl," a specific name: it is presently opposed to "Nákah," a she-dromedary, and "Ráhilah,' a riding-camel.

the salam; and, lodging him in a corner of the tent, sat entertaining him with chat, the cheeriest that might be. When his food was dressed, the Arab's wife brought it to the guest, and he looked at the mistress of the tent and saw a semblance than which no seemlier might be. Indeed, her beauty and loveliness, her symmetry and perfect grace, amazed him, and he was struck with astonishment, gazing now at her and then at her mate. When his looking grew long, the man said to him, "Ho, thou son of the worthy! Busy thyself with thine own business, for by me and this woman hangeth a wondrous tale which is even better than that thou seest of her beauty; and I will tell it to thee when we have made a finish of our food." So, when they had ended eating and drinking, the young man asked his host for the story, and he said:—Know that in my youth I was the same as thou seest me in the matter of loathliness and foul favour; and I had brethren of the fairest of the folk; wherefore my father preferred them over me and used to show them kindness, to my exclusion, and made me serve in their stead, like as a master employeth slaves. One day, a dromedary of his strayed from the herd of camels, and he said to me, "Go thou forth in quest of her and return not but with her." I replied, "Send other than I of thy sons." But he would not consent to this and scolded me and insisted upon me, till the matter came to such a pass with him that he took a thong-whip and fell to beating me. So I arose and saddling a riding-camel, mounted her and sallied forth at random, purposing to go into the wolds and wilds and return to him never more. I fared on all my night and the next day, and coming at eventide[1] to the encampment of this my wife's people, alighted down with and became the guest of her father, who was a Shaykh well stricken in years. Now when it was the noon of night, I arose and went forth the tent at a call of nature, and none knew of my case save this woman. The dogs followed me as a suspected stranger, and ceased not worrying me[2] till I fell on

1 Here "Amsaytu" is used in its literal sense, "I evened" (came at evening), and this is the case with seven such verbs, Asbaha, Amsá, Azhá, Azhara, A'tama, Zalla, and Báta, which either conjoin the sense of the sentence with their respective times, morning, evening, forenoon, noon and the first sun-down watch, all day and all night, or are used "elegantly," as grammarians say, for the simple "becoming" or "being."

2 The Badawi dogs are as dangerous as those of Montenegro, but not so treacherous: the latter will sneak up to the stranger and suddenly bite him most viciously. I once had a narrow escape from an ignoble death near the slaughter-house of Alexandria-Ramlah, where the beasts were unusually ferocious. A pack assailed me at early dawn and but for an iron stick and a convenient wall I should have been torn to pieces.

my back into a pit, wherein was water, a deep hollow and a steep; and a dog of those dogs fell in with me. The woman, who was then a girl in the bloom of youth, full of strength and spirit, was moved to ruth on me, for the calamity whereinto I was fallen, and coming to me with a rope, said to me, "Catch hold of the rope." So I hent it and clung to it and she haled me up, but, when I was half-way up, I pulled her down and she fell with me into the pit; and there we abode three days, she and I and the hound. When her people arose in the morning and did not see her, they sought her in the camp, but, finding her not and missing me also, never doubted but she had fled with me.[1] Now she had four brothers, as they were Saker-hawks, and they took horse and dispersed in search of us. When the day yellowed on the fourth dawn, the dog began to bark and the other hounds answered him and coming to the mouth of the pit, stood howling to him. The Shaykh, my wife's father, hearing the howling of the hounds, came up and standing at the brink of the hollow, looked in and beheld a marvel. Now he was a brave man and a sensible, an elder experienced in affairs, so he fetched a cord and bringing forth the three, questioned us twain of our case. I told him all that had betided and he fell a-pondering the affair. Presently, her brothers returned, whereupon the old man acquainted them with the whole case and said to them, "O my sons, know that your sister intended not aught but good, and if ye kill this man, ye will earn abiding shame and ye will wrong him, and wrong your own souls and eke your sister: for indeed there appeareth no cause such as calleth for killing, and it may not be denied that this accident is a thing whose like may well occur, and that he may easily have been the victim of suchlike chance." Then he addressed me and questioned me of my lineage; so I set forth to him my genealogy and he, exclaiming, "A man of her match, honourable, understanding," offered me his daughter in wedlock. I consented to this and marrying her, took up my abode with him and Allah hath opened on me the gates of weal and wealth, so that I am become the richest in monies of the tribesmen; and the Almighty hath stablished me in that which He hath given me of His bounties. The young man marvelled at his tale and lay the night with him; and when he arose in the morning, he found his estrays. So he took them and returning to his folk, acquainted them with what he had

1 These elopements are of most frequent occurrence, see Pilgrimage, iii 52.

seen and all that had befallen him. "Nor" (continued the Wazir) "is this stranger or rarer than the story of the King who lost kingdom and wealth and wife and children, and Allah restored them to him and requited him with a realm more magnificent than that which he had forfeited and better and finer and greater of wealth and degree." The Minister's story pleased the King and he bade him depart to his abode.

The Twenty-Sixth Night of the Month.

WHEN came the night, the king summoned his Wazir and bade him tell the story of the King who lost kingdom and wife and wealth. He replied, "Hearing and obeying! Give ear, O sovran, to

THE TALE OF THE KING WHO LOST KINGDOM AND WIFE AND WEALTH AND ALLAH RESTORED THEM TO HIM.[1]"

There was once a king of the kings of Hind, who was a model of morals, praiseworthy in policy, lief of justice to his lieges, lavish to men of learning and piety and abstinence and devoutness and worship, and shunning mischief-makers and froward folk, fools and traitors. After such goodly fashion he abode in his kingship what Allah the Most High willed of watches and days and twelvemonths,[2] and he married the daughter of his father's brother, a beautiful woman and a winsome, endowed with brightness and perfection, who had been reared in the king's house in delicacy and delight. She bare him two sons, the most beauteous that might be of boys, when came Destiny from whose decree is no deliverance, and Allah the Most High raised up against the King another king, who came forth upon his realm, and was joined by all the folk of the city that had a mind to lewdness and frowardness. So he strengthened himself by means of them against the King and compassed his kingdom, routing his troops and killing his guards. The King took his wife, the mother of his sons, and what he might of monies and saved his

1 The principal incidents, the loss and recovery of wife and children, occur in the Story of the Knight Placidus (Gesta Romanorum, cx.). But the ecclesiastical tale-teller does not do poetical justice upon any offenders, and he vilely slanders the great Cæsar, Trajan.

2 *i.e.*, a long time: the idiom has already been noticed. In the original we have "of days and years and twelvemonths" in order that "A'wám" (years) may jingle with "Ayyám" (days).

life and fled in the darkness of the night, unknowing whither he should wend. Whenas wayfare grew sore upon them, there met them highwaymen on the way, who took all that was with them, so that naught remained to each of them save a shirt and trousers; the robbers left them without even provaunt or camels or other riding-cattle, and they ceased not to fare on afoot, till they came to a copse, which was an orchard of trees on the ocean shore.[1] Now the road which they would have followed was crossed by a sea-arm, but it was shallow and scant of water; wherefore, when they reached that place, the king took up one of his children and fording the water with him, set him down on the further bank and returned for his other son, whom also he seated by his brother. Lastly, returning for their mother, he took her up and passing the water with her, came to the place where he had left his children, but found them not. Thereupon he looked at the midst of the island and saw an old man and an old woman, engaged in making themselves a reed-hut: so he set down his wife over against them and started off in quest of his children, but none gave him news of them and he went round about right and left, yet found not the whereabouts they were. On this wise fared it with him; but as to the children, they had entered the copse to make water, and they found there a forest of trees, wherein, if a sturdy horseman[2] strayed, he might wander by the week, and never know its first from its last. So the boys pushed into it and wotted not how they should return and went astray in that wood, for a purpose willed of Allah Almighty, whilst their father sought them but found them not. So he returned to their mother and they abode weeping for their children; as for whom, when they entered the forest, it swallowed them up and they fared at haphazard, wandering in it many days, knowing not whence they came or whither they went, till they issued forth, at another side, upon the open country. Meanwhile, their parents, the king and queen, tarried in the island, over against the old man and his old woman, and ate of the fruits and drank of the rills that were in it till, one day of the days, as they sat, behold, up came a ship and made fast to the island-side, for provisioning with water, whereupon they[3] looked one at other and spoke. The master of the

1 Nothing can be more beautiful than the natural parks which travellers describe on the coasts of tropical seas.

2 Arab. "Khayyál," not only a rider but a good and a hard rider. Hence the proverb "Al-Khayyál kabr maftúh" = uomo a cavallo sepoltura aperta.

3 *i.e.*, the crew and the islanders.

craft was a Magian man, and all that was therein, both crew and goods, belonged to him, for he was a trader and went round about the world. Now greed of gain deluded the old man, the owner of the island, and he fared to the ship and gave the Guebre news of the King's wife, setting out to him her charms, till he made him long for her and his soul moved[1] him to practise treachery and cozenage upon her, and take her from her husband. Accordingly, he sent to her, saying, "Aboard with us is a woman with child, and we dread lest she be delivered this night: hast thou aught of skill in midwifery?" She replied, "Yes." Now it was the last of the day; so he sent to her to come up into the ship and deliver the woman, for that the labour-pangs were come upon her; and he promised her clothes and spending-money. Hereat she embarked confidently, with heart at ease for herself, and transported her gear to the ship; but no sooner had she come thither than the sails were hoisted and the canvas was loosed[2] and the ship set sail. When the King saw this, he cried out and his wife wept in the ship and would have cast herself into the waves; but the Magian bade his men lay hands on her. So they seized her, and it was but a little while ere the night darkened and the ship vanished from the King's eyes; whereupon he fainted away for excess of weeping and lamentation, and passed his night bewailing his wife and his children. And when the morning morrowed he began improvising these couplets[3]:—

O World, how long, this spite, this enmity?
Say me, dost ever spare what spared can be?
And look! my friends have farèd fain and free!
They went and went wi' them my dear delight
E'en from the day when friends to part were dight
And turbid made their lost life's clarity.
By Allah, ne'er I wist their worth aright
Nor ever wot I worth of friends unite
Till fared they, leaving flame in heart of me!

I'll ne'er forget them since what day each wight
Hied and withdrew fro' me his well-loved sight

1 Arab. "Hadas," a word not easy to render. In grammar Lumsden renders it by "event," and the learned Captain Lockett (Miut Amil) in an awful long note (pp. 195 to 224) by "mode," grammatical or logical. The value of his disquisition is its proving that, as the Arabs borrowed their romance from the Persians, so they took their physics and metaphysics of grammar and syntax, logic and science in general, from the Greeks.

2 We should say the anchors were weighed and the canvas spread.

3 The rhymes are disposed in the *quaintest way, showing extensive* corruption Mr. Payne has ordered them into couplets with a "bob" or refrain; I have followed suit, preserving the original vagaries of rhymes.

And yet I weep this parting-blow to dree.
I vow an Heaven deign my friends return
And cry the crier in mine ears that yearn
"The far is near, right soon their sight shall see!"
Upon their site my cheeks I'll place, to sprite
I'll say, "Rejoice, thy friends return to thee!"
Nor blame my heart when friends were lief to flee:
I rent my heart ere rent my raimentry.

He sat weeping for the severance of his wife and children till the morning, when he went forth wandering at a venture, unweeting what he should do, and ceased not walking along the sea-shore days and nights, unknowing whither he went and taking no food save the herbs of the earth, and seeing neither man nor wildling nor other living thing, till his wayfare brought him to a mountain-top. He sojourned in the highland and abode awhile, there alone, eating of its fruits and drinking of its founts; then he came down thence and trudged along the high road three days, when he hit upon tilled fields and villages, and gave not over going till he made a great city on the shore of the salt sea and came to its gate at the last of the day. The gatekeepers allowed him no admission; so he spent his night anhungered, and when he arose in the morning, he sat down hard by the portal. Now the king of the city was dead and had left no son, and the citizens fell out anent who should be ruler over them: and their words and redes differed, so that civil war was like to befall them thereupon. But it came to pass that, after long jangle, they agreed to leave the choice to the late king's elephant, and that he unto whom he consented should be king and that they would not contest with him the sway. So to this they sware and on the morrow, they brought out their elephant and fared forth to a site within sight of the city; nor was there man or woman but was present at that moment. Then they adorned the elephant and raising the throne on his back, gave him the crown in his trunk; and he went round about examining the countenances of the folk, but stopped not over against any of them till he came at last to the forlorn King, the exile who had lost his children and his wife, when the beast prostrated himself to him and placing the crown on his head, took him up and set him upon his back. Thereupon the people all prostrated themselves and gave mutual joy of this and the drums[1] of good tidings beat before him, and he entered

1 Arab. "Nuwab," broken plur. (that is, noun of multitude) of Naubah, the Anglo-Indian Nowbut. This is applied to the band playing at certain intervals before the gate of a Rajah or high official.

the city and went on till he reached the House of Justice and the Audience-hall of the Palace and sat down upon the throne of the kingdom, crown on head; whereat the lieges entered to congratulate him and to bless him. Then he addressed himself, as was his wont in the kingship, to forwarding the affairs of the folk and ranging the troops according to their ranks and looking into their affairs and those of all the Ryots. He also released those who were in the dungeons and abolished the custom-dues and gave honourable robes and lavished great gifts and bestowed largesse and conferred favours on the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the realm, and the Chamberlains[1] and Nabobs presented themselves before him and did him homage. So the city people rejoiced in him and said, "Indeed, this be none other than a King of the greatest of the kings." And presently he assembled the sages and the theologians and the sons of the Sovrans, and conversed with them, and asked them subtile questions and casuistical problems, and talked over with them things manifold of all fashions that might direct him to rectitude in the kingship; and he questioned them also of mysteries and religious obligations, and of the laws of the land and the regulations of rule, and of that which it beseemeth the liege lord to do of looking into the affairs of the lieges, and repelling the foe and fending off his malice with force and fight; so the subjects' contentment redoubled, and their exultation in that which Allah Almighty had vouchsafed them of his kingship over them. On such wise he upheld the ordinance of the realm, and the affairs abode stablished upon the accepted custom and local usage. Now the late king had left a wife and two daughters, and the people would fain have married the Princess royal to the new king that the rule might not pass clean away from the old rulers. Accordingly, they proposed to him that he should wed her or the other of the deceased king's daughters, and he promised them this, but put them off from him, of his respect for the covenant he had made with his former wife, his cousin, that he would marry none other than herself. Then he betook himself to fasting by day and praying through the night, multiplying his alms-deeds and beseeching Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) to reunite him with his children and his wife, the daughter of his father's brother. When a year had elapsed, there came to the city a ship, wherein were

1 Arab. "Hájib": Captain Trotter ("Our Mission to the Court of Morocco in 1880": Edinburgh, Douglas, 1881) speaks, passim, of the "cheery little Hâjeb or Eyebrow." Really this is too bad: why cannot travellers consult an Orientalist when treating of Oriental subjects?

many merchants and much merchandise. Now it was their custom from time immemorial that the king, whenever a ship made the port, sent to it such of his pages as he trusted in, who took agency of the goods, to the end that they might be first shown to the Sovran, who bought as much of them as befitted him and gave the merchants leave to sell whatso he wanted not. So he commissioned, according to his custom, a man who should fare to the ship and seal up the bales, and set over them one who could watch and ward them. Meanwhile, the Queen his wife, when the Magian fled with her and proffered himself to her and lavished upon her abounding wealth, rejected him and was like to kill herself[1] for chagrin at that which had befallen and for concern anent her separation from her husband. She also refused meat and drink, and resolved to cast herself into the sea; but the Magian chained her and straitened her and clothed her in a coat of wool and said to her, "I will continue thee in wretchedness and humiliation till thou obey me and accept me." So she took patience and looked for the Almighty to deliver her from the hand of that accursed; and she ceased not travelling with him from country to country till he came with her in fine to the city wherein her husband was king and his goods were put under seal. Now the woman was in a chest and two youths of the late king's pages, who were now in the new King's service, were those who had been charged with the watch and ward of the craft and her cargaison. When the evening evened on them, the twain began talking and recounted that which had befallen them in their days of childhood, and the manner of the faring forth of their father and mother from their country and kingdom when the wicked overcame their realm, and how they had gone astray in the forest, and how Fate had severed them from their parents; for short, they told their tale from first to last. When the woman heard their talk, she knew that they were her sons and cried out to them from the chest, "I am your mother, Such-

1 Suicide is rare in Moslem lands, compared with India, China, and similar "pagan" countries; for the Mussulman has the same objection as the Christian "to rush into the presence of his Creator." The Hindu also has some curious prejudices on the subject; he will hang himself, but not by the neck, for fear lest his soul be defiled by exiting through an impure channel. In England hanging is the commonest form for men; then follow in due order drowning, cutting or stabbing, poison, and gun-shot: women prefer drowning (except in the cold months) and poison. India has not yet found a Dr. Ogle to tabulate suicide; but the cases most familiar to old Anglo-Indians are leaping down cliffs (as at Giruar), drowning, and starving to death. And so little is life valued that a mother will make a vow obliging her son to suicide himself at a certain age.

an-one, and the token between you twain and me is thus and thus." The young men knew the token, and falling upon the chest brake the lock and brought out their mother, who seeing them, strained them to her bosom, and they fell upon her and fainted away, all three. When they came to themselves, they wept awhile and the people assembled about them, marvelling at that they saw, and questioned them of their case. So the young Princes vied each with other who should be the first to discover the story to the folk; and when the Magian saw this, he came up, crying out, "Alack!" and "Ruin!" and said to them, "Why and wherefore have ye broken open my chest? Verily, I had in it jewels and ye have stolen them, and this damsel is my slave-girl and she hath agreed with you both upon a device to take my wealth." Then he rent his raiment and cried for aid, saying, "I appeal to Allah and to the just King, so he may quit me of these wrongous youths!" They both replied, "This is our mother and thou stolest her": whereupon words waxed manifold between them and the folk plunged into talk with many a "he said" and "'twas said" concerning their affair and that of the pretended slave-girl, and the strife increased between them, so that at last they carried them all four to the King's court. When the two young men presented themselves between his hands and stated their case to him and to the folk and the sovran heard their speech, he knew them, and his heart was like to fly for joy: the tears poured from his eyes at their sight and the sight of his wife, and he thanked Allah Almighty and praised Him for that He had deigned reunite them. Then he bade the folk who were present about him be dismissed, and commanded the Magian and the woman and the two youths be to morrow committed to his armoury[1] for the night, ordering that they should keep guard over them all until the Lord should make the morning to morrow, so he might assemble the Kazis and the Justiciaries and Assessors and determine between them, according to Holy Law, in the presence of the four judges. So they did this, and the King passed the night praying and praising Allah of All-might for that which He had vouchsafed him of kingship and power and victory over the wight who had wronged him, and thanking Him who had reunited him with his own. When the morning morrowed, he assembled the Kazis and Deputies and

1 Arab. "Zarad-Khánah," before noticed: vol. vi. night dcclxxiii. Here it would mean a temporary prison for criminals of high degree. De Sacy, Chrestom, ii. 179.

Assessors[1] and summoning the Magian and the two youths and their mother, questioned them of their case; whereupon the two young men began and said, "We are the sons of King Such-an-one, and foemen and lewd fellows gat the mastery of our realm; so our sire fled forth with us and wandered at hap-hazard, for fear of the foe." And they recounted to him all that had betided them, from beginning to end.[2] Quoth he, "Ye tell a marvel-tale; but what hath Fate done with your father?" Quoth they, "We know not how Fortune dealt with him after our loss." And he was silent. Then he bespake the woman, "And thou, what sayest thou?" So she set forth to him her case and all that had betided her and her husband, from the beginning of their hardships to the end, and recounted to him their adventures up to the time when they took up their abode with the old man and woman who dwelt on the sea-shore. Then she reported that which the Magian had practised on her of fraud, and how he had carried her off in the craft and everything that had betided her of humiliation and torment; all this while the Kazis and Judges and Deputies hearkening to her speech as they had lent ear to the others' adventures. When the King heard the last of his wife's tale, he said, "Verily, there hath betided thee a mighty grievous matter; but hast thou knowledge of what thy husband did and what came of his affair?" She replied, "Nay, by Allah; I have no knowledge of him, save that I leave him no hour unremembered in righteous prayer, and never, whilst I live, will he cease to be to me the father of my children, and my cousin and my flesh and my blood." Then she wept, and the King bowed his head, whilst his eyes welled tears at her tale. Presently he raised his head to the Magian and cried to him, "Say thy say, thou also." So the Magian replied, "This is my slave-girl, whom I bought with my money from such a land and for so many dinars, and I made her my betrothed[3] and loved her exceedingly and gave my monies into her charge; but she falsed me in my substance and plotted with one of my lads to slay me, tempting him by a promise that she would kill me and become his wife. When I knew this of her and was assured that she purposed treason against me, I awoke from my dream of happiness, and did with her that which I did, fearing for my life from her craft and perfidy; for indeed she is a trickstress with

1 Arab. "'Adúl," I have said, means in Marocco, that land of lies and subterfuges, a public notary.

2 This sentence is inserted by Mr. Payne to complete the sense.

3 *i.e.*, he intended to marry her when time served.

her tongue and she hath taught these two youths this pretence, by way of sleight and of her guile and her malice: so be you not deluded by her and by her talk." "Thou liest, O accursed," cried the King and bade lay hands on him and iron him. Then he turned to the two youths, his sons, and strained them to his breast, weeping sore and saying, "O all ye people who are present of Kazis and Assessors and Lords of the land, know that these twain are my sons, and that this is my wife and the daughter of my father's brother; for that whilome I was king in such a realm." And he recounted to them his history from commencement to conclusion, nor is there aught of fruition in repetition; whereupon the folk cried out with weeping and wailing for the stress of what they heard of marvellous chances and that wondrous story. As for the king's wife, he bade carry her into his palace and lavished upon her and upon her sons all that befitted and beseemed them of bounties, whilst the lieges flocked to offer up prayers for him and give him joy of his reunion with his wife and children. When they had made an end of blessings and congratulations, they besought the king to hasten the punishment of the Magian, and heal their hearts with tormenting and abasing him. So he appointed them for a day on which they should assemble to witness his requitement and that which should betide him of torment, and shut himself up with his wife and two sons, and abode thus private with them three days, during which they were veiled from the folk. On the fourth day the King entered the Hammam, and faring forth, sat down on the throne of his kingship, crown on head, whereupon the folk came in to him, according to their custom and after the measure of their several dignities and degrees, and the Emirs and Wazirs entered, and eke the Chamberlains and Nabobs and Captains of war and the Falconers and Armbearers and Commanders of the body-guard. Then he seated his two sons, one on his right and the other on his left hand, whilst the subjects all stood before him and lifted up their voices in thanksgiving to Allah the Most High and glorification of Him, and were instant in orisons for the king and in setting forth his virtues and excellent qualities. He answered them with the most gracious of answers and bade carry the Magian outside the city and set him on a high scaffold which had been builded for him there; and he said to the folk, "Behold, I will torture him with torments of all kinds and fashions." Then he began telling them that which he had wrought of villainy with his cousin-wife and what he had caused her of severance between her and her husband and

how he had required her of her person, but she had sought refuge for her chastity against him with Allah (to whom belong honour and glory!) and chose abasement rather than obedience to him, despite stress of torture: neither recked she aught of that which he lavished to her of monies and raiment, jewels and ornaments. When the King had made an end of his story, he bade the by-standers spit in the Magian's face and curse him; and they did this. Then he bade cut out his tongue and on the next day he bade lop off his ears and nose and pluck out both his eyes. On the third day he bade hew off his hands and on the fourth his feet; and they ceased not to dismember him, limb after limb, and each member they cast into the fire, after its amputation, before his face, till his soul departed, after he had endured torments of all kinds and fashions. Then the King bade crucify his trunk on the city wall for three days; after which he gave orders to burn it and reduce its ashes to powder and scatter them abroad in air. And when this was done, the King summoned the Kazi and the Witnesses and commanded them marry the old king's daughter and her sister to his own sons; so the youths wedded them, after the King had made a bride-feast three days and displayed their brides to them from nightfall to day-dawn. Then the two Princes went in unto their brides and abated their virginities and loved them and were vouchsafed issue by them. As for the King their sire, he abode with his cousin-wife, their mother, what while Allah (to whom be honour and glory!) willed, and they rejoiced in reunion each with other. The kingship endured unto them and high degree and victory, and the sovran continued to rule with justice and equity, so that the lieges loved him and prayed for him and for his sons length of life and durance of days; and they lived the most delightsome of existences till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies, the Depopulator of palaces and Garnerer of graves; and this is all that hath come down to us of the story of the King and his Wife and Sons. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "if this story be a solace and a diversion, is it pleasanter or more diverting than the tale of the Youth of Khorasan and his mother and sister." When King Shah Bakht heard this story, it pleased him and he bade the Minister hie away to his own house.

The Twenty-seventh Night of the Month.

When evening came, the king, Shah Bakht, bade fetch the Wazir; so he presented himself before him and the King ordered

him to tell the tale. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O sovran, to

THE TALE OF SALIM, THE YOUTH OF KHORASAN, AND SALMA, HIS SISTER."

Know, O king (but Allah alone knoweth His secret purpose and is versed in the past and the foredone among folk bygone) that there was once, in the parts of Khorasan, a man of its affluent, who was a merchant of the chiefest of the merchants[1] and was blessed with two children, a son and a daughter.[2] He was diligent exceedingly in rearing them, and they were educated with the fairest of education; for he used to teach the boy, who taught his sister all that he learnt, so that, by means of her brother, the damsel became perfect in the knowledge of the Traditions of the Prophet and in polite letters. Now the boy's name was Salím and that of the girl Salmá. When they grew up and were fully grown, their father built them a mansion beside his own and lodged them apart therein, and appointed them slave-girls and servants to tend them, and assigned to each of them pay and allowances, and all that they needed of high and low; meat and bread; wine, dresses, and vessels and what not else. So Salim and Salma abode in that palace, as they were one soul in two bodies, and they used to sleep on one couch and rise amorn with single purpose, while firmly fixed in each one's heart were fond affection and familiar friendship for the other. One night, when the half was spent, as Salim and Salma sat recounting and conversing, they heard a noise on the ground floor; so they looked out from a latticed casement which gave upon the gate of their father's mansion, and saw a man of fine presence, whose clothes were hidden under a wide cloak. He came straight up to the gate and laying hold of the door-ring, rapped a light rap; whereupon the door opened and behold, out came their sister, with a lighted taper, and after her their mother, who saluted the stranger and embraced him, saying, "O dearling of my heart and light of mine eyes and fruit of my vitals, enter." So he went in and shut the door, whilst Salim and Salma abode amazed. The youth turned to the girl and said to her, "O sister mine, how deemest thou of this trouble, and what advice hast

1 Arab from Pers Khwájah and Khawáját: see vol iv night dlv.

2 Probably meaning by one mother whom he loved best of all his wives: in the same page we read of their sister.

thou to offer?" She replied, "O my brother, indeed I know not what I shall say anent the like of this; but he is not disappointed who divine direction seeketh, nor doth he repent who counsel taketh. One getteth not the better of the traces of burning by haste, and know that this is an affliction that hath descended[1] on us and a calamity foreordained to us; so we have need of wise rede to do it away and contrivance which shall wash our shame from our faces." And they ceased not watching the gate till daybreak, when the young man opened the door and their mother farewelled him; after which he went his way and she entered, she and her hand-maid. Hereat said Salim to his sister, "Know thou I am resolved to slay this man, an he return the next night, and I will say to the folk, He was a robber, and none shall weet that which hath befallen. Then I will address myself to the slaughter of whosoever knoweth what is between the fellow and my mother." But Salma said, "I fear lest an thou slay him in our dwelling-place, and he be not convicted of robberhood, suspicion and ill-fame will revert upon ourselves, and we cannot be assured that he belongeth not to a tribe whose mischief is to be feared and whose enmity is to be dreaded, and thus wilt thou have fled from hidden shame to open shame and to disgrace public and abiding." Asked Salim: "What then is it thy rede to do?" And she answered, "Is there no help but thou kill him? Let us not hasten unto slaughter, for that the slaughter of a soul without just cause is a mighty grave matter." When Shahbán[2] heard this, he said within himself, "By Allah, I have indeed been hasty and reckless in the slaying of women and girls, and Alhamdolillah—lauded be the Lord!—who hath occupied me with this damsel from the slaughter of souls, for that the slaughter of souls is a grave matter and a grievous! By the Almighty, if Shah Bakht spare the Wazir, I will assuredly spare Sháhrázád[3]!" Then he gave ear to the story and heard her say to her sister:—Quoth Salma to Salim, "Hasten not to slay him, but overthink the matter and consider the issue whereto it may tend; for whoso considereth not of actions the end hath not Fortune to friend." Then they arose on the morrow and busied themselves with contriving how they should turn away their

1 Come down, *i.e.*, from heaven.

2 This is the Bresl. Edit's. form of Shahryár = city-keeper (like Marzbán, guardian of the Marches), for city-friend. The learned Weil has preferred it to Shahryár.

3 Sic: in the Mac. Edit. "Shahrázád," and here making nonsense of the word. It is regretable that the king's reflections do not run at times as in this text: his compunctions lead well up to the dénoûment.

parent from that man, and the mother forefelt mischief from them, for what she saw in their eyes of change, she being wily and keen of wit. So she took precaution for herself against her children, and Salma said to Salim, "Thou seest what we have fallen upon through this woman, and very sooth she hath sensed our purpose and wotteth that we have discovered her secret. So, doubtless, she will plot against us the like of that which we plot for her; for indeed up to now she had concealed her affair, and from this time forth she will become harsh to us; wherefore, methinks, there is a thing forewritten to us, whereof Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) knew in His foreknowledge and wherein He carrieth out His commandments." He asked, "What is that?" and she answered, "It is that we arise, I and thou, and go forth this night from this land and seek us a town wherein we may wone and witness naught of the doings of yonder traitress; for whoso is absent from the eye is absent from the heart, and quoth one of the poets in the following couplet[1]:—

'Tis happiest, best for thee, the place to leave, * For then no eye can see, nor heart can grieve."

Quoth Salim to her,[2] "'Tis for thee to decide and right is thy rede; so let us do this, in the name of Allah the Almighty, trusting in Him for guiding and grace." Accordingly they arose and took the richest of their raiment and the lightest of that which was in their treasuries of gems and things of price and gathered together much matter. Then they equipped them ten mules and hired them servants of other than the people of the country; and Salim bade his sister Salma don man's dress. Now she was the likest of all creatures to him, so that, when she was clad in man's clothing, the folk knew no difference between them:—extolled be the perfection of Him who hath no like, there is no god but He! Then he told her to mount a mare, whilst he himself took another, and they set out under cover of the night; nor did any of their family or household know of them. So they fared on into Allah's wide world, and gave not over going night and day for a space of two months, at the end of which they came to a city on the sea-shore of the land of Makran,[3] by name Al-Sharr,

1 The careless text says "couplets." It has occurred in vol. i. night xvi.: so I quote Torrens (p. 149).

2 In the text Salma is made to speak, utterly confusing the dialogue.

3 The well-known Baloch province beginning west of Sind; the term is supposed to be a corruption of Máhi-Khorán=Ichthyophagi. The reader who wishes to know more about it will do well to consult "Unexplored Baluchistan," etc. (Griffith and Farran, 1882), the excellent work of my friend Mr. Ernest A. Floyer, long Chief of the Telegraphic Department, Cairo.

and it is the first city in Sind.[1] They lighted down within sight of the place and when they arose in the morning, they saw a populous city and a goodly, seemly of semblance and great, abounding in trees and rills and fruits and wide of suburbs which stretched to the neighbouring villages. So the young man said to his sister Salma, "Tarry thou here in thy place, till I enter the city and make proof of it and its people, and seek us out a stead which we may buy and whereto we may remove. An it befit us, we will make us a home therein, otherwise will we take counsel of departing elsewhere." Quoth she, "Do this, trusting in the bounty of Allah (to whom belong honour and glory!) and in His blessing." Accordingly he took a belt, wherein were a thousand gold pieces, and girding it about his waist, entered the city and ceased not going round about its streets and bazars, and gazing upon its houses and sitting with those of its citizens whose aspect showed signs of worth and wealth, till the day was half spent, when he resolved to return to his sister, and said to himself, "Needs must I buy what we may eat of ready-cooked food; I and my sister." Hereupon he addressed a man who sold roast meat and who was clean of person, albe foul in his way of getting a living, and said to him, "Take the price of this dishful and add thereto of fowls and chickens and what not else is in your market of meats and sweetmeats and bread, and arrange it in the plates." So the Kitchener took the money and set apart for him what he desired, then calling a porter, he laid it in the man's crate, and Salim, after paying the price of provisions and porterage in fullest fashion, was about to go away, when the Cook said to him, "O youth, doubtless thou art a stranger?" He replied, "Yes"; and the other rejoined, "'Tis reported in one of the Traditions that the Apostle said, Loyal admonition is a part of religion; and the wise and ware have declared counsel is of the characteristics of True Believers. And verily that which I have seen of thy ways pleaseth me, and I would fain give thee a warning." Rejoined Salim, "Speak out thy warning, and may Allah strengthen thy purpose!" Then said the Cook, "Know, O my son, that in this our city, when a stranger entereth and eateth of flesh-meat and drinketh not old wine upon it, 'tis harmful to him and disturbeth his body with disorders which be dangerous. Wherefore, an thou have provided thee somewhat of wine it is well, but, if not, haste to procure it, ere thou take the meat and carry it away."

1 Meaning the last city in Makran before entering Sind. Al-Sharr would be a fancy name, "The Wickedness."

Quoth Salim, "Allah requite thee with weal—Canst thou shew me where liquor is sold?" and quoth the Cook, "With me is all thou seekest." The youth asked, "Is there a way for me to see it?" and the Cook sprang up and answered, "Pass on." So he entered, and the man showed him somewhat of wine; but he said, "I desire better than this"; whereupon he opened a door and entering, said to Salim, "Come in, and follow me." Accordingly Salim followed him till he brought him to an underground chamber, and showed him somewhat of wine that suited him. So he occupied him with looking at it, and taking him unawares, sprang upon him from behind and threw him to the ground and sat upon his breast. Then he drew a knife and set it to his jugular; whereupon there betided Salim that wherewith Allah made him forget all that he had decreed to him,[1] and he cried to the Cook, "Why dost thou this thing, O good fellow? Be mindful of the Almighty and fear Him. Seest thou not I am a stranger man? And knowest thou not I have behind me a forlorn, defenceless[2] woman. Wherefore wilt thou kill me?" Quoth the Kitchener, "Needs must I kill thee, so I may take thy money"; and quoth Salim, "Take my money, but kill me not, neither enter into sin against me; and do with me kindness, for indeed the taking of my coin is more venial than the taking of my life." The Cook replied, "This is nonsense. Thou canst not deliver thyself herewith, O youth, because in thy deliverance is my destruction." Cried Salim, "I swear to thee and give thee the bond of Allah (to whom belong honour and glory!) and His covenant, which He took of His Prophets that I will not discover thy secret; no, never." But the Kitchener replied, "Away! Away! Alas! Alas! To this there is no path." However, Salim ceased not to conjure him and humble himself to him and weep, while the Cook persisted in his intent to cut his throat: then he shed tears and recited these couplets[3]:—

Haste not to that thou dost desire, for haste is still unblest; Be merciful to men, as thou on mercy reckonest:
For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it, And no oppressor but shall be with worse than he opprest.

Quoth the Kitchener, "There is no help save that I slay thee, O fellow; for an I spare thee, I shall myself be slain." But Salim

1 *i.e.*, think of nothing but his present peril.

2 Arab. "Munkati'ah" = lit. "cut off" (from the weal of the world). See Pilgrimage, i. 22.

3 The lines are in vol. i. night xxi. and vol. iii. night cccvii. I here quote Mr. Payne.

said, "O my brother, I will advise thee somewhat[1] other than this." Asked the Cook, "What is it? Say and be brief, ere I cut thy throat"; and Salim answered, "Suffer me to live and keep me as thy Mameluke, thy white slave, and I will work at a craft of the skilled workmen, wherefrom there shall result to thee every day two dinars." Quoth the Kitchener, "What is the craft?" and quoth Salim, "The cutting of gems and jewels." When the man heard this, he said to himself, "'Twill do me no hurt if I imprison him and fetter him and bring him that whereat he may work. An he tell truth, I will let him live, and if he prove a liar, I will kill him." So he took a pair of stout shackles and fitting them on Salim's legs, jailed him within his house and charged a man to guard him. Then he asked him what tools he needed for work; and Salim described to him whatso he required, and the Cook went out from him awhile and brought him all he wanted. Then Salim sat and wrought at his craft; and he used every day to earn two dinars; and this was his wont and custom with the Kitchener, who fed him not but half his fill. Thus befell it with Salim; but returning to his sister Salma, she awaited him till the last of the day, yet he appeared not; and she expected him a second day and a third and a fourth, yet there came no news of him. So she wept and beat hand on breast, and bethought her of her affair and her strangerhood and the disappearance of her brother; and she improvised these couplets:—

Salam t'you! Would I could see you again, * To the joy of my heart and the coolth of my eyes:
You are naught but my hope and the whole of my hope * And under my ribs[2] love for you buried lies.

She tarried on this wise awaiting him till the end of the month, but no tidings of him came nor happened she upon aught of his trace; wherefore she was troubled with exceeding trouble, and sending her servants hither and thither in search of him, abode in the sorest that might be of chagrin and concern. When it was the beginning of the new month, she arose in the morning, and bidding one of her men cry her brother throughout the city, sat to receive visits of condolence, nor was there any in town but made act of presence to condole with her; and they were all sorry for her, doubting not her being a man. When three nights had passed over her with their days of the second month, she despaired of him and her tears never dried: then she resolved to

1 *i.e.*, I have another proposal to make.
2 *i.e.*, in my heart's core: the figure has often occurred.

take up her abode in that city, and making choice of a dwelling removed thither. The folk resorted to her from all parts, to sit with her and hear her speech and witness her fine breeding; nor was it but a little while ere the king died and the folk differed anent whom they should invest with the kingship after him, so that civil war was like to befall them. However, the men of judgment and the folk of understanding and the people of experience directed them to crown the youth who had lost his brother, for that they still held Salma to be a man. They consented to this one and all; and, betaking themselves to her, offered the kingship.[1] She refused, but they were urgent with her, till she consented, saying within herself, "My sole desire in the kingship is to find my brother." Then they seated her upon the throne of the realm and set the crown upon her head, after which she undertook the business of governance and ordinance of affairs; and they rejoiced in her with the utmost joy. On such wise fared it with her; but as for Salim he abode with the Cook a whole year's space, bringing him two dinars a day; and when his affair waxed longsome, the man felt for him and pitied him. Presently he promised him release on condition that, if he let him go, he should not discover his ill-deeds to the Sultan; for that it was his wont now and then to entrap a man and carry him to his house and slay him and take his money and cook his flesh and give it to the folk to eat.[2] So he asked him, "O youth, wilt thou that I release thee from this thy misery, on condition that thou be reasonable and never discover aught of thine affair?" Salim answered, "I will swear to thee by whatsoever oath thou wilt administer that I will keep thy secret and will not speak one syllable anent thee, what while I am in the land of the living." Quoth the Kitchener, "I purpose to send thee forth with my brother and cause thee voyage with him over the sea, on condition that thou be to him a Mameluke, a boughten slave; and when he cometh to the land of Hind, he shall sell thee and thus wilt thou

1 These sudden elevations, so common in the East and not unknown to the West in the Napoleonic days, explain how the legend of "Joanna Papissa" (Pope John XIII.), who succeeded Leo IV. in A.D. 855, and was succeeded by Benedict III., found ready belief amongst the enemies of papacy. She was an English woman born in Germany, who came to Rome and professed theology with éclat, wherefore the people enthroned her. "Pope Joan" governed with exemplary wisdom, but during a procession on Rogation Sunday she was delivered of a fine boy in the street: some make her die on the spot; others declare that she perished in prison.

2 That such things should happen in times of famine is only natural; but not at other seasons. This abomination on the part of the butcher is, however, more than once alluded to in The Nights: see vol. i. night xxxi.

be delivered from prison and slaughter." And quoth Salim, "'Tis well: be it as thou sayst, may Allah the Most High requite thee with weal!" Accordingly the Cook equipped his brother and freighting him a craft, stowed therein a cargaison of merchandise. Then he committed Salim to him and they set out with the ship. The Lord decreed them safety, so that they arrived at the first city of Hind, which is known as Al-Mansúrah,[1] and cast anchor there. Now the king of that city had died, leaving a daughter and a widow who, being the quickest-witted of women and cleverest of the folk of her day, gave out that the girl was a boy, so that the kingship might be established unto them. The troops and the Emirs gave credit that the case was as she avouched, and that the Princess was a Prince; wherefore they obeyed her bidding, and the Queen-mother took order for the matter and used to dress the girl in man's habit and seat her on the throne of the kingship, so that the Lords of the land and the chief officers of the realm used to go in to her and salute her and do her service and depart, nothing doubting but she was a boy. After this fashion they fared for months and years, and the Queen-mother ceased not to do thus till the Cook's brother came to the town in his ship, and with him Salim. He landed with the youth and displayed him for sale to the Queen who, when she saw him, prognosticated well of him; presently she bought him and was kind to him and entreated him with honour. Then began she to prove him in his moral parts, and make assay of him in his affairs, and she found in him all that is in kings' sons of understanding and fine breeding and good manners and qualities. Thereupon she sent for him in private and said to him, "I am minded to do thee a service, so thou canst keep a secret.[2]" He promised her all that she desired, and she discovered to him her mystery in the matter of her daughter, saying, "I will marry thee to her, and commit to thee the governance and constitute thee king and ruler over this city." He thanked her and promised to carry out all she should order him, and she said to him, "Go forth to Such-an-one of the neighbouring provinces privily." So he went forth, and on the morrow she made ready loads and gear

1 Opinions differ as to the site of this city, so celebrated in the mediæval history of Al-Islam: most probably it stood where Hyderabad of Sind now is. The question has been ably treated by Sir Henry M. Elliot in his "History of India," edited from his posthumous papers by Professor Dowson.

2 Which, by-the-by, the average Eastern does with even more difficulty than the average European. For the most part the charge to secrecy fixes the matter in his mind even when he has forgotten that it is to be kept secret Hence the most unpleasant results.

and gifts and bestowed on him abundant substance, all of which they loaded on the backs of baggage-camels. Then she gave out among the folk that the nephew of the king, the son of his brother, was come, and bade the Grandees and troops go forth to meet him in a body: she also decorated the city in his honour and the kettle-drums of good tidings beat for him, whilst all the king's household went out and dismounting before him, escorted him into, and lodged him with the Queen-mother in the palace. Then she bade the Headmen of the state attend his assembly; so they obeyed and witnessed of his breeding and good parts that which amazed them, and made them forget the breeding of the kings who had preceded him. When they were grown to like him, the Queen-mother began sending privily for the Emirs and Councillors, one by one, and swearing them to conceal her project; and when she was assured of their discretion, she discovered to them that the king had left naught save a daughter, and that she had done this only that she might continue the kingship in his family, and that the rule should not go forth from them; after which she informed them that she was minded to marry her daughter with her nephew, the new-comer; and that he should be the holder of the kingship. They approved her proposal, and when she had discovered the secret to the last of them and assured herself of their aid, she published the news abroad and threw off all concealment. Then she sent for the Kazis and Assessors, who drew up the contract of marriage between Salim and the Princess, and they lavished gifts upon the soldiery and overwhelmed them with largesse. The bride was incontinently carried in procession to the young man, and the kingship was established to him. They tarried after this fashion a whole year when Salim said to the Queen-mother, "Know that my life is not pleasing to me nor can I abide with you in content till I get me tidings of my sister, and learn how her affair hath ended, and how she hath fared after me. So I will go forth and be absent from you a year's space; then will I return to you, Inshallah—an it please God the Most High! —and I win of this that which I hope." Quoth she, "I will not trust to thy word, but will go with thee and help thee to whatso thou wishest and further thee myself therein." Then she took a ship and loaded it with all manner things of price, goods and monies and the like. Furthermore, she appointed one of the Wazirs, a man in whom she trusted for his conduct and contrivance, to rule the realm, saying to him, "Abide in governance a full year and ordain all thou needest." Presently the Queen-mother and her daughter and son-in-law Salim went down to the

ship, and sailed on till they made the land of Makran. Their arrival there befell at the last of the day; so they nighted in their ship, and when the morn was near to dawn, the young king landed that he might go to the Hammam, and walked marketwards. As he drew near the bath, the Cook met him on the way and knew him; so he seized him and pinioning him straightly, carried him to his house, where he clapped the old fetters on his feet, and cast him back into his former place of durance vile.[1] Salim, finding himself in that sorry condition and considering that wherewith he was afflicted of tribulation and the reverses of his fair fortune, in that he had been a king and was now returned to fetters and prison and hunger, wept and groaned and lamented and improvised these couplets :—

My God, no patience now can aid afford; * Strait is my breast, O Thou of Lords the Lord:
My God, who in resource like thine hath force? * And Thou, the Subtle, dost my case record.

On this wise fared it with Salim; but as regards his wife and her mother, when she awoke in the morning and her husband returned not to her with break of dawn, she forbode all manner of calamity and, straightway arising, she despatched her servants and all who were with her in quest of her spouse; but they happened not on any trace of him, nor could they hear aught of his news. So she bethought herself concerning the case, and plained and wept and groaned and sighed and blamed Fortune the fickle, bewailing the changes of Time and reciting these couplets[2] :—

God keep the days of love-delight! How passing sweet they were!
How joyous and how solaceful was life in them whilere!
Would he were not, who sundered us upon the parting-day! How
many a body hath he slain, how many a bone laid bare!
Sans fault of mine, my blood and tears he shed and beggared me
Of him I love yet for himself gained nought thereby whate'er.

When she had made an end to her verses, she considered her affair and said within herself, "By Allah, all these things have betided by the predestination of Almighty Allah and His decree, and this upon the forehead was written in lines." Then she landed and walked on till she came to a spacious place, and an

1 Such an act appears impossible, and yet history tells us of a celebrated Sufi, Khayr al-Nassáj (the Weaver), who being of dark complexion was stopped on return from his pilgrimage at Kufah by a stranger that said, "Thou art my negro slave and thy name is Khayr." He was kept at the loom for years, till at last the man set him free, and simply said, "Thou wast not my slave" (Ibn Khall i. 513)

2 These lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne for variety.

open, where she asked of the folk and hired a house. Thither she transported forthright all that was in the ship of goods, and sending after brokers sold all that was with her. Presently she took part of the price and began enquiring of the folk, so haply she might scent out tidings of the lost one; and she addressed herself to lavishing alms and preparing medicines for the sick, clothing the naked and watering the dry ground[1] of the forlorn. She ceased not so doing a whole year, and little by little she sold off her goods and gave charitable gifts to the sick and sorry; whereby her report was bruited abroad in the city and the folk abounded in her praise All this while Salim lay in fetters and strait prison, and melancholy gat hold of him by reason of that whereinto he had fallen of this affliction. At last, when care waxed on him and calamity grew longsome, he fell sick of a sore sickness. Then the Kitchener, seeing his plight (and verily he was like to sink for much suffering), loosed him from the fetters, and bringing him forth of the prison, committed him to an old woman, who had a nose the bigness of a gugglet,[2] and bade her nurse him and medicine him and serve him and entreat him kindly, so haply he might be made whole of that his sickness. Accordingly the old woman took him and carrying him to her lodging, began nursing him and giving him to eat and drink; and when he was delivered of that torment, he recovered from the malady which had afflicted him. Now the old woman had heard from the folk of the lady who gave alms to the sick, and indeed the news of her bounties reached both poor and rich; so she arose, and bringing out Salim to the door of her house, laid him upon a mat and wrapped him in an Abá-gown and sat over against him. Presently, it befell that the lady passed by them, and the old woman seeing her rose to her and blessed her, saying, "O my daughter, O thou to whom belong goodness and beneficence and charity and almsdoing,[3] know that this young man is a foreigner, and indeed lack and lice and hunger and nakedness and cold slay him." When the lady heard this, she gave her alms, and presented her with a part of that which was with her; and

1 Arab. "Tasill sallata'l-Munkáti'in" = lit. "raining on the drouth-hardened earth of the cut-off." The metaphor is admissible in the eyes of an Arab who holds water to be the chiefest of blessings, and makes it synonymous with bounty and beneficence.

2 Possibly this is said in mere fun; but, as Easterns are practical physiognomists, it may hint the fact that a large nose in womankind is the sign of a masculine nature.

3 Arab. "Zakát wa Sadakat," = lit. paying of poor rate and purifying thy property by almsdeeds. See vol. i. night xxxiii

indeed her charitable heart inclined to Salim, but she knew him not for her spouse. The old woman received the alms from her and carrying it to Salim, took part for herself and with the rest bought him an old shirt,[1] in which she clad him, after she had stripped him of that he had on. Then she threw away the frock she had taken from off him and arising forthwith, washed his body of that which was thereon of grime and scented him with somewhat of scent. She also bought him chickens and made him broth; so he ate and his life returned to him, and he abode with her in all comfort of condition till the morrow. Next morning the old woman said to Salim, "When the lady cometh to thee, arise and buss her hand and say to her:—I am a homeless man and indeed cold and hunger kill me; so haply she may give thee somewhat that thou mayest expend upon thy case." And he answered, "To hear is to obey." Then she took him by the hand and carrying him without her house, seated him at the door; and as he sat, behold, the lady came up to him, whereupon the old woman rose to her and Salim kissed her hand and, looking at her the while, blessed her. But when he saw her, he knew her for his wife; so he shrieked and shed tears and groaned and plained, at which she came up to him and threw herself upon him; for indeed she knew him with all knowledge, even as he knew her. So she hung to him and embraced him, and called to her serving men and attendants and those who were about her; and they took him up and carried him forth of that stead. When the old woman saw this, she cried out to the Cook within the house, and he said to her, "Fare thou before me." So she forewent him and he ran after her and ceased not running till he overtook the party and seizing Salim, exclaimed, "What aileth you to take my slave-lad?" Whereupon the Queen cried out at him, saying, "Know that this is my husband, whom I had lost"; and Salim also cried out, saying, "Mercy! Mercy! I appeal to Allah and to the Sultan against this Satan!" Therewith a world of folk straightway gathered together, and loud rose the cries and the clamours between them; but the most part of them said, "Carry their case up to the Sultan." So they referred the matter to the king, who was none other than Salim's sister Salma. Then they repaired to the palace, and the dragoman went in to Salma and said to her, "O king of the age, here is a

1 I have noted (vol. i. night xxviii) that Kamis (χιτών, Chemise, Cameslia, Camisa) is used in the Hindostani and the Bengali dialects Like its synonyms prætexta and shift, it has an equivocal meaning, and here probably signifies the dress peculiar to Arab devotees and devout beggars.

Hindi woman, who cometh from the land of Hind, and she hath laid hands on a servant, a young man, claiming him as her husband, who hath been lost to her these two years, and she journeyed not hither save for his sake, and in very sooth these many days she hath done almsdeeds in thy city, And here is a fellow, a Kitchener, who declareth that the young man is his slave.[1]" When the Queen heard these words, her vitals quivered, and she groaned from a grieving heart, and called to mind her brother and that which had betided him. Then she bade those around her bring them between her hands, and when she saw them, she knew her brother and was about to cry aloud; but her reason restrained her; yet could she not prevent herself rising up and sitting down.[2] At last, however, she enforced her soul to patience, and said to them, "Let each and every of you acquaint me with his case." So Salim came forward and kissing ground before the king, lauded him and related to him his story from first to last, until the time of their coming to that city, he and his sister, telling him how he had entered the place and had fallen into the hands of the Cook, and that which had betided him, and whatso he had suffered from him of beating and collars, of fetters and pinioning, till the man had made him his brother's Mameluke, a boughten slave, and how the brother had sold him in Hind and he had become king by marrying the Princess: and how life was not lovesome to him till he should foregather with his sister, and now the same Cook had fallen in with him a second time and had pinioned and fettered him. Brief, he acquainted her with that which had betided him of sickness and sorrow for the space of a whole year. When he had made an end of his speech, his wife straightways came forward and told her story, from incept to termination, how her mother bought him[3] from the Cook's partner and the people of the kingdom came under his rule; nor did she cease telling till she came, in her history, to that city and acquainted the king with the manner of her meeting her husband. When she had made an end of her adventure, the Kitchener exclaimed, "Alack, what befalls us from lying rascals. By Allah, O king, this woman lieth against me, for this youth is my rearling,[4] and he was born of one

1 I omit here and elsewhere the parenthetical formula "Kála al-Ráwí," etc.=The Story-teller sayeth, reminding the reader of its significance in a work collected from the mouths of professional Tale-tellers and intended mainly for their use.

2 The usual sign of emotion, already often mentioned.

3 It being no shame to Moslems if a slave become King.

4 Arab. "Tarbiyati," *i.e.*, he was brought up in my house.

of my slave-girls. He fled from me and I found him again." When the Queen heard the last of the talk, she said to the Cook, "The decree between you shall not be save in accordance with justice." Then she dismissed all those who were present and turning to her brother, said to him, "Indeed thy truth is stablished with me and the sooth of thy speech, and praised be Allah who hath brought about reunion between thee and thy wife! So now begone with her to thy country, and cease to seek thy sister Salma, and depart in peace." But, hearing this, Salim replied, "By Allah, by the might of the All-knowing King, I will not turn back from seeking my sister till I die or I find her, Inshallah!" Then he called his sister to mind and improvised from a heart disappointed, troubled, afflicted, these couplets:—

O thou who blam'st me for my heart, in anger twitting me, * Hadst tasted what my heart did taste, thou wouldst be pitying me!
By Allah, O my chider for my sister leave, ah! leave, * My heart to moan its grief and feel the woes befitting me.
Indeed I grew to hold her dear privily, publicly; * And in my bosom bides a pang at no time quitting me;
And in my vitals burns a flame that ne'er was equalled by * The fire of hell, and blazeth high to Death committing me.

Now when his sister Salma heard what he said, she could no longer restrain her soul, but threw herself upon him and discovered to him her case. When he knew her, he threw himself upon her swooning awhile; after which he came to himself and cried, "Lauded be the Lord, the Bountiful, the Beneficent!" Then they plained each to other of that they had suffered from the pangs of parting, whilst Salim's wife wondered at this, and Salma's patience and endurance pleased her. So she saluted her with the salam, and thanked her for her fair boons, saying, "By Allah, O my lady, all that we are in of gladness never befell us save by thy blessing; so praised be Allah who deigned vouchsafe us thy sight!" Then they tarried all three, Salma, Salim and his wife, in joy and happiness and delight three days, veiled from the folk; and it was bruited abroad in the city that the king had found his brother, who was lost for many a year, and had saved him from the Cook's house. On the fourth day, all the troops and the lieges assembled together to see the King, and standing at his gate, craved leave to enter. Salma bade admit them; so they entered and paid her royal suit and service, and gave her joy of her brother's safe return. She bade them do homage to Salim, and they consented and sware fealty to him; after which they kept silence awhile, so

they might hear what the king should command. Then quoth Salma, "Ho, ye gathering of soldiers and subjects, ye wot that ye forced me willy-nilly to accept the kingship and besought me thereof, and I consented to your desires anent my being raised to rule over you; and I did this against my will; for I would have you know that I am a woman and that I disguised myself and donned man's dress, so peradventure my case might be concealed when I lost my brother. But now Allah hath deigned reunite me with my brother, and it is no longer lawful to me that I be king and Sultan over the people, and I a woman; because there is no Sultanate for women, whenas men are present.[1] For this reason, an it suit you, set my brother on the throne of the kingdom, for this is he; and I will busy myself with the worship of Allah the Most High, and thanksgiving to Him for my reunion with my brother. Or, an ye prefer it, take your kingship and make whom you will ruler and liege lord thereof." Upon this the folk all cried out, saying, "We accept him to king over us"; and they did him suit and service, and gave him joy of the kingship. So the preachers preached the sermon[2] in his name and the court-poets praised him; and he lavished largesse upon the soldiery and the suite, and overwhelmed them with favours and bounties, and was prodigal to the Ryots of justice and equity, with goodly policy and polity. When he had effected this much of his affect, he caused bring forth the Cook and his household to the diwan, but spared the old woman who had nursed him, because she had been the cause of his deliverance. Then all assembled without the town and he tormented the Cook and those who were with him with all manner torments, after which he did him to die by the foulest of deaths[3] and burning him with fire, scattered his ashes far and wide in the air. After this Salim

1 There is no Salic law amongst Moslems; but the Rasm or custom of Al-Islam, established by the succession of the first four Caliphs, to the prejudice of Ayishah and other masterful women, would be a strong precedent against queenly rule. It is the reverse with the Hindus who accept a Rani as willingly as a Rajah, and who believe with Europeans that when kings reign women rule, and *vice versa*. To the vulgar Moslem feminine government appears impossible, and I was once asked by an Afghan, "What would happen if the queen were in childbed?"

2 Arab. "Khutbah," the sermon preached from the pulpit (Mimbar) after the congregational prayers on Friday noon. It is of two kinds, for which see Lane, M.E., chap. iii. This public mention of his name and inscribing it upon the newly-minted money are the special prerogatives of the Moslem king: hence it often happens that usurpers cause a confusion of Khutbah and coinage.

3 For a specimen of which, blowing a man up with bellows, see Al-Mas'udi, chap. cxxiii.

abode in the governance, invested with the Sultanate, and ruled the people a whole year, when he returned to Al-Mansúrah and sojourned there another year. And he and his wife ceased not to go from city to city, and tarry in this a year and that a year, till he was vouchsafed children and they grew up, whereupon he appointed him of his sons, who was found fitting, to be his deputy in one kingdom and he ruled in the other; and he lived, he and his wife and children, what while Almighty Allah willed.[1]" "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "O King of the age, is this story rarer or stranger than the King of Hind and his wronged and envied Minister." When the King heard this, his mind was occupied,[2] and he bade the Wazir hie to his own house.

The Twenty-Eighth and Last Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister and bade him tell the story of the King of Hind and his Wazir. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O auspicious King, to

THE TALE OF THE KING OF HIND AND HIS WAZIR."

There was once in the Hind-land a king illustrious of worth, endowed with understanding and policy, and his name was Shah Bakht. He had a Minister, a godly man and a sagacious, right prudent in rede, conformable to him in governance and just in judgment; for which cause his enviers were many and many were the hypocrites who sought faults in him and set snares for him, so that they insinuated into King Shah Bakht's eyes hatred against him and sowed in his heart despite towards him; and plot followed plot, and their rancour waxed until the king was brought to arrest him and lay him in jail and to confiscate his wealth and degrade him from his degree. When they knew that there was left him no possession for which the king might lust, they feared lest the sovran release him, by the influence of the Wazir's good counsel upon the king's heart, and he return to his former case, so should their machinations be marred and their degrees degraded, for that they knew that

1 *i.e.*, a long time: the idiom has been noted before more than once.
2 *i.e.*, with what he had heard and what he was promised.

the king would need whatso he had known from that man, nor would forget aught wherewith he was familiar in him. Now it came to pass that a certain person of perverted belief[1] found a way to the adorning of falsehood with a semblance of fair-seeming, and there proceeded from him that whereby the hearts of the folk were occupied, and their minds were corrupted by his lying tales; for that he made use of Indian quiddities[2] and forged them into proof for the denial of the Maker, the Creator, extolled be His might and exalted be He and glorified and magnified above the speech of the deniers! He avouched that it is the planets which order all worldly affairs, and he set down twelve mansions[3] to twelve Zodiacal signs, and made each sign thirty degrees,[4] after the number of the days of the month, so that in twelve mansions there are three hundred and sixty, after the number of the days of the year; and he wrought a work, wherein he lied and was an infidel and denied the Deity, be He for ever blessed! Then he laid hold of the king's heart and the enviers and haters aided him against the Minister, and won the royal favour and corrupted his intent against the Wazir, so that he got of him that which he got, and at last his lord banished him and thrust him away. By such means the wicked man obtained that which he sought of the Minister, and the case was prolonged till the affairs of the kingdom became disordered, by dint of ill government, and the most part of the king's reign fell off from him and he came nigh unto ruin. On this wise he was assured of the loyalty of his whilome sagacious Wazir and the excellence of his ordinance and the rectitude of his rede. So he sent after him and brought him and the wicked man before him and, summoning to his presence the Lords of his land and the Chiefs of his chieftainship, gave them leave to talk and dispute and forbade the wicked man from his perverted belief.[5] Then arose that wise Minister and skilful, and praised Allah Almighty and lauded Him and glorified Him and hallowed Him and attested His unity and disputed with

1 Arab. "Shakhs mafsúd," *i.e.*, an infidel

2 Arab. "Bunúd," plur. of Persian "band" = hypocrisy, deceit.

3 Arab. "Burúj" pl. of Burj. lit. = towers, an astrological term equivalent to our "houses" or constellations which form the Zodiacal signs surrounding the heavens as towers gird a city; and applied also to the 28 lunar mansions. So in Al-Hariri (Ass. of Damascus), "I swear by the sky with its towers," the incept of Koran chapt. lxxxv.; see also chapts. xv. 26 and xxv. 62. "Burj" is a word with a long history: πύργος burg, burgh, etc.

4 Arab. "Bundukah" = a little bunduk, nut, filbert, pellet, rule, musket bullet.

5 See John Raister's "Booke of the Seven Planets; or, Seven Wandering Motives," London, 1598.

the miscreant and overcame him and silenced him; nor did he cease from him till he compelled him to make confession of repentance from that which he had misbelieved. Therewith King Shah Bakht rejoiced with exceeding great joy and cried, "Praise be to the Lord who hath saved me from this man, and hath preserved me from the loss of my kingship and my prosperity!" So the affair of the Wazir returned to order and stablishment, and the king restored him to his place and raised him to higher rank. Lastly, he assembled the folk who had striven against him and destroyed them all, to the last man. "And how like" (continued the Wazir), "is this story to that of myself and King Shah Bakht, with regard to that which befell me of the changing of the King and his crediting others against me; but now is the fairness of my fashion fulfilled in thine eyes, for that Allah Almighty hath inspired thee with wisdom and endowed thee with longanimity and patience to hear from me whatso He allotted to those who forewent us, till He hath shown forth my innocence and made manifest unto thee the truth. For lo and behold! the days are now past, wherein it was declared to the king that I should labour for the loss of my soul,[1] that is within the month; and lookye, the probation-time is gone by, and past is the season of evil, and it hath ceased by the protection of the King and his good fortune." Then he bowed his head and was silent. When King Shah Bakht heard his Wazir's speech, he was abashed before him and confounded, and he marvelled at the gravity of his intellect and his long-suffering. So he sprang up to him and embraced him, and the Minister kissed his feet. Then the King called for a costly robe of honour and cast it over Al-Rahwan, and honoured him with the highmost honour and showed him especial favour and restored him to his degree and Wazirate. Furthermore, he imprisoned those who had devised his destruction with lies and leasing, and gave him full leave and license to pass judgment upon the Interpreter who had expounded to him the dream. So the Wazir abode in the ordering of the realm until Death came to them; "And this" (added Shahrazad) "is all, O king of the age, that hath come down to us of King Shah Bakht and his Wazir."

1 *i.e.*, for the king whom I love as my own soul.

SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR.

As for King Shahryar, he wondered at Shahrazad with the utmost wonder, and drew her near to his heart of his abounding affection for her; and she was magnified in his eyes and he said within himself, "By Allah, the like of this is not deserving of slaughter, for indeed the time favoureth us not with her equal. By the Almighty, I have been reckless of mine affair, and had not the Lord overcome me with His ruth and put this one at my service so she might recount to me instances manifest and cases truthful and admonitions goodly and traits edifying, such as should restore me to the right road, I had come to ruin! Wherefore to Allah be the praise herefor, and I beseech the Most High to make my end with her like that of the Wazir and Shah Bakht." Then sleep overcame the king and glory be unto Him who sleepeth not[1]! When it was the Nine hundred and thirtieth Night, Shahrazad said, "O king, there is present in my thought a tale which treateth of women's trickery, and wherein is a warning to whoso will be warned, and an admonishment to whoso will be admonished, and whoso hath sight and insight; but I fear lest the hearing of this belittle me with the liege-lord and lower my degree in his esteem; yet I hope that this will not be, because 'tis a rare tale. Women are indeed mischief-makers; their craft and their cunning may not be told nor may their wiles be known; while men enjoy their company and are not instant to uphold them in the right way, neither are they vigilant over them with all vigilance, but relish their society and take whatso is winsome and regard not that which is other than this. Indeed, they are like unto the crooked rib, which an thou go about to straighten, thou distortest it, and which an thou persist in straightening, thou breakest it[2]; so it behoveth the wise man to be silent concerning them." Thereupon quoth Dinarzad, "O sister mine, bring forth that which is with thee and that which is present to thy mind of the story concerning the guile of women and their wiles, and have no fear lest this lessen thee with the king; for that women are, like jewels, of all

1 The Bresl. Edit. (xi. 318-21) seems to assume that the tales were told in the early night before the royal pair slept. This is no improvement; we prefer to think that the time was before peep of day, when Easterns usually awake and have nothing to do till the dawn-prayer.

2 See vol. ii. night lxii.

kinds and colours. When a gem falleth into the hand of an expert, he keepeth it for himself and leaveth all beside it. Eke he preferreth some of them over others, and in this he is like the potter,[1] who filleth his kiln with all the vessels he hath moulded and under them kindleth his fire. When the baking is done and he taketh out that which is in the kiln, he findeth no help for it but that he must break some of them, whilst others are what the folk need and whereof they make use, while yet others there are which return to be as they were. So fear thou not nor deem it a grave matter to adduce that which thou knowest of the craft of women, for that in this is profit for all folk." Then said Shahrazad, "They relate, O king (but Allah alone knoweth the secret things) the Tale of—

1 Arab. Al-Fákhir. No wonder that the First Hand who moulded the Man-mud is a *lieu commun* in Eastern thought. The Pot and the Potter began with the old Egyptians. "Sitting as a potter at the wheel, god Cneph (in Philæ) moulds clay, and gives the spirit of life (the Genesitic "breath") to the nostrils of Osiris" Then we meet him in the Vedas, the Being "by whom the fictile vase is formed; the clay out of which it is fabricated." We find him next in Jeremiah (xviii. 2), "Arise and go down unto the Potter's house," etc., and in Romans (ix 21), "Hath not the Potter power over the clay?" He appears in full force in Omar-i-Khayyám (No. xxxvii.):—

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

Lastly the Potter shows in the Kasîdah of Hají Abdú al-Yazdi (p. 4):—

"The first of pots the Potter made by Chrysorrhoas' blue-green wave;
Methinks I see him smile to see what guerdon to the world he gave"

AND OF VOLUME I. OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS.

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VOLUME II.

Supplemental Nights

TO THE BOOK OF THE

Thousand Nights and a Night

WITH NOTES ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND EXPLANATORY

BY

RICHARD F. BURTON.



TO HENRY IRVING, Esq.

My dear Irving,

To a consummate artist like yourself I need hardly suggest that The Nights still offers many a virgin mine to the Playwright; and I inscribe this volume to you, not only in admiration of your genius, but in the hope that you will find means of exploiting the hidden wealth which awaits only your "Open, Sesame!"

Ever yours sincerely,

RICHARD F. BURTON.

London, *August* 1, 1886.

AL-MALIK AL-ZAHIR RUKN AL-DIN BIBARS AL-BUNDUKDARI AND THE SIXTEEN CAPTAINS OF POLICE.[1]"

THERE was once in the climes[2] of Egypt and the city of Cairo, under the Turks, a king of the valiant kings and the exceeding mighty Soldans, hight Al-Malik al-Záhir Rukn al-Din Bibars al-Bundukdári,[3] who was used to storm the Islamite sconces and the strongholds of "The Shore[4]" and the Nazarine citadels. His Chief of Police in the capital of his kingdom, was just to the folk, all of them; and Al-Malik al-Zahir delighted in stories of the common sort, and of that which men purposed in thought; and he loved to see this with his own eyes, and to hear their sayings with his own ears. Now it fortuned that he heard one night from a certain of his nocturnal reciters[5] that among women are those who are doughtier than the doughtiest men and prower of prowess, and that among them are some who will engage in fight singular with the sword and others who beguile the quickest-witted of Walis and baffle them, and bring down on them all manner of miseries; wherefore said the Soldan, "I would lief hear this of their legerdemain from one of those who have had to do with it, so I may hearken unto him and cause him discourse." And one of the story-tellers said, "O king, send for the Chief of Police of this thy city." Now 'Alam al-Din[6] Sanjar was at that time Wali and he was a man of experience, in affairs well versed; so the king sent for him, and when he came before him, he discovered to him that which was in his mind. Quoth Sanjar, "I

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. xi. pp. 321-99, nights dccccxxx-xl.

2 Arab. "Iklim" from the Gr. κλίμα, often used as amongst us (*e.g.*, "other climes") for land.

3 Bibars, whose name is still famous and mostly pronounced "Baybars," the fourth of the Baharite Mamelukes, whom I would call the "Soldans" Originally a slave of Al-Sálih, seventh of the Ayyubites, he rose to power by the normal process, murdering his predecessor, in A.D. 1260; and he pushed his conquests from Syria to Armenia. In his day Saint Louis died before Tunis (A.D. 1270).

4 There are sundry Sáhils or shore-lands. "Sahil Misr" is the Riverside of Cairo often extended to the whole of Lower Egypt (vol. i. night xxviii.): here it means the lowlands of Palestine once the abode of the noble Philistines; and lastly the term extends to the sea-board of Zanzibar, where, however, it is mostly used in the plur. "Sawáhil"=the Shores.

5 Arab. "Sammár" (from Samar=conversatio nocturna),=the story-teller who in camp or house whiles away the evening hours.

6 "Flag of the Faith": Sanjar in old Persian=a Prince, a King.

will do my endeavour for that which our lord seeketh." Then he arose and returning to his house, summoned the Captains of the watch and the Lieutenants of the ward and said to them, "Know that I purpose to marry my son and make him a bridal banquet, and I desire that ye assemble, all of you, in one place. I also will be present, I and my company, and do ye relate that which you have heard of rare occurrences, and that which hath betided you of experiences." And the Captains and Runners and Agents of Police answered him, "'Tis well: Bismillah—in the name of Allah! We will make thee see all this with thine own eyes and hear it with thine own ears." Then the Chief of Police arose and going up to Al-Malik al-Zahir, informed him that the assembly would meet on such a day at his house; and the Soldan said, "'Tis well," and gave him somewhat of coin for his spending-money. When the appointed day came the Chief of Police set apart for his officers and constables a saloon, which had latticed casements ranged in order and giving upon the flower-garden, and Al-Malik al-Zahir came to him, and he seated himself and the Soldan, in the alcove. Then the tables were spread for them with food and they ate: and when the bowl went round amongst them and their souls were gladdened by meat and drink, they mutually related that which was with them and revealed their secrets from concealment. The first to discourse was a man, a Captain of the Watch, hight Mu'ín al-Dín,[1] whose heart was wholly occupied with the love of fair women; and he said, "Harkye, all ye people of high degree, I will acquaint you with an extraordinary affair which fortuned me aforetime." Then he began to tell

THE FIRST CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.[2]

KNOW ye that when I entered the service of this Emir,[3] I had a great repute, and every low fellow and lewd feared me most of all

1 "Aider of the Faith."

2 These policemen's tales present a curious contrast with the detective stories of M. Gaboriau and his host of imitators. In the East the police, like the old Bow Street runners, were and are still recruited principally amongst the criminal classes on the principle of "Set a thief," etc. We have seen that the Barmecide Wazirs of Baghdad "anticipated Fourier's doctrine of the *passionel* treatment of lawless inclinations," and employed as subordinate officers, under the Wali or Prefect of Police, accomplished villains like Ahmad al-Danaf (vol. iii. cclxiv.), Hasan Shuuman and Mercury Ali (ibid), and even women (Dalilah the Crafty), to coerce and checkmate their former comrades. Moreover, a gird at the police is always acceptable, not only to a coffee-house audience, but even to a more educated crowd; witness the treatment of the "Charley" and the "Bobby" in our truly English pantomimes.

3 *i.e.*, the Chief of Police, as the sequel shows.

mankind, and when I rode through the city, each and every of the folk would point at me with their fingers and sign at me with their eyes. It happened one day, as I sat in the palace of the Prefecture, back-propped against a wall, considering in myself, suddenly there fell somewhat in my lap, and behold, it was a purse sealed and tied. So I hent it in hand and lo! it had in it an hundred dirhams,[1] but I found not who threw it and I said, "Lauded be the Lord, the King of the Kingdoms[2]!" Another day, as I sat in the same way, somewhat fell on me and startled me, and lookye, 'twas a purse like the first: I took it and hiding the matter, made as though I slept, albeit sleep was not with me. One day as I thus shammed sleep, I suddenly sensed in my lap a hand, and in it a purse of the finest; so I seized the hand and behold, 'twas that of a fair woman. Quoth I to her, "O my lady, who art thou?" and quoth she, "Rise and come away from here, that I may make myself known to thee." Presently I rose up and following her, walked on, without tarrying, till we stopped at the door of a high-builded house, whereupon I asked her, "O my lady, who art thou? Indeed, thou hast done me kindness, and what is the reason of this?" She answered, "By Allah, O Captain[3] Mu'in, I am a woman on whom love and longing are sore for desire of the daughter of the Kazi Amín al-Hukm.[4] Now there was between me and her what was, and fondness for her fell upon my heart and I agreed upon an assignation with her, according to possibility and convenience; but her father Amin al-Hukm took her and went away, and my heart cleaveth to her and yearning and distraction waxed sore upon me for her sake." I said to her, marvelling the while at her words, "What wouldst thou have me do?" and said she, "O Captain Mu'in, I would have thee lend me a helping hand." Quoth I, "Where am I and where is the daughter of the Kazi Amin al-Hukm[5]?" and quoth she, "Be assured that I would not have thee intrude upon the Kazi's daughter, but I would fain work for the winning of my wishes.

1 About £4.

2 *i.e.*, of the worlds visible and invisible.

3 Arab. "Mukaddam": see vol. iii. night cclv.

4 "Faithful of Command"; it may be a title as well as a P.N. For "Al-Amín," see vol. iii. night cccxxxviii.

5 *i.e.*, "what have I to do with," etc., or "how great is the difference between me and her." The phrase is still popular in Egypt and Syria; and the interrogative form only intensifies it. The student of Egyptian should always try to answer a question by a question. His labours have been greatly facilitated by the conscientious work of my late friend Spitta Bey. I tried hard to persuade the late Rogers Bey, whose knowledge of Egyptian and Syrian (as opposed to Arabic) was considerable, that a simple grammar of Egyptian was much wanted; he promised to undertake it, but death cut short the design.

This is my will and my want which may not be wroughten save by thine aid." Then she added, "I mean this night to go with heart enheartened and hire me bracelets and armlets and anklets of price; then will I hie me and sit in the street wherein is the house of Amin al-Hukm; and when 'tis the season of the round and folk are asleep, do thou pass, thou and those who are with thee of the men, and thou wilt see me sitting and on me fine raiment and ornaments, and wilt smell on me the odour of Ottars; whereupon do thou question me of my case and I will say:—I hail from the Citadel and am of the daughters of the deputies[1] and I came down into the town for a purpose; but night overtook me all unawares, and the Zuwaylah Gate[2] was shut against me and all the other portals and I knew not whither I should wend this night. Presently I saw this street and noting the goodly fashion of its ordinance and its cleanliness, I sheltered me therein against break of day. When I speak these words to thee with complete self-possession,[3] the Chief of the watch will have no ill suspicion of me, but will say:—There's no help but that we leave her with one who will take care of her till morning. Thereto do thou rejoin:—'Twere best that she night with Amin al-Hukm and lie with his wives[4] and children until dawn of day. Then straightway knock at the Kazi's door, and thus shall I have secured admission into his house, without inconvenience, and won my wish; and—the Peace!" I said to her, "By Allah, this is an easy matter." So, when the night was blackest, we rose to make our round, followed by men with girded swords, and went about the ways and compassed the city, till we came to the street[5] where was the woman, and it was the middle of the night. Here we smelt mighty rich scents and heard the clink of rings: so I said to my comrades, "Methinks I espy a spectre"; and the Captain of the watch cried, "See what it is." Accordingly, I undertook the work, and entering the thoroughfare presently came out again and said, "I have found a fair woman, and she telleth me that she is from the Citadel, and that dark night surprised her, and she saw this street, and noting its cleanness and goodly fashion of ordinance, knew that it belonged to a great man[6] and that needs must there be in

1 Arab. "Nawwáb," plur. of Náib (lit. deputies, lieutenants) = a Nabbb.

2 For this famous and time-honoured building, see vol. i. night xxv.

3 Arab. "Tamkín," gravity, assurance.

4 Arab. "'Iyál-hu," lit. his family, a decorous circumlocution for his wives and concubines

5 Arab. "Darb," lit a road; here a large thoroughfare.

6 When Mohammed Alí Pasha (the "Great") began to rule, he found Cairo "stifled" with filth, and gave orders that each householder, under pain of confiscation, should keep the street before his house perfectly clean. This

it a guardian to keep watch over it, so she sheltered her therein." Quoth the Captain of the watch to me, "Take her and carry her to thy house"; but quoth I, "I seek refuge with Allah[1]! My house is no strong box,[2] and on this woman are trinkets and fine clothing. By Allah, we will not deposit the lady save with Amin al-Hukm, in whose street she hath been since the first starkening of the darkness; therefore do thou leave her with him till the break of day." He rejoined, "Do whatso thou willest." So I rapped at the Kazi's gate and out came a black slave of his slaves, to whom said I, "O my lord, take this woman and let her be with you till day shall dawn, for that the lieutenant of the Emir Alam al-Din hath found her with trinkets and fine apparel on her, sitting at the door of your house, and we feared lest her responsibility be upon you[3]; wherefore I suggested 'twere meetest she night with you." So the chattel opened and took her in with him. Now when the morning morrowed, the first who presented himself before the Emir was the Kazi Amin al-Hukm, leaning on two of his negro slaves; and he was crying out and calling for aid and saying, "O Emir, crafty and perfidious, yesternight thou depositedst with me a woman and broughtest her into my house and home, and she arose in the dark and took from me the monies of the little orphans my wards,[4] six great bags, each containing a thousand dinars,[5] and made off; but as for me, I will say no syllable to thee except in the Soldan's presence.[6]" When the Wali heard these words he was troubled, and rose and sat down in his agitation; then he took the Judge and placing him by his side, soothed him and exhorted him to patience, till he had made

was done after some examples had been made, and the result was that since that time Cairo never knew the plague I am writing at Tangier where a Mahommed Ali is much wanted.

1 *i.e.*, Allah forfend!

2 Arab. "Mustauda'"=a strong place where goods are deposited and left in charge.

3 Because, if she came to grief, the people of the street, and especially those of the adjoining houses, would get into trouble. Hence in Moslem cities, like Damascus and Fez, the Hárát or quarters are closed at night with strong wooden doors, and the guards will not open them except by means of a silver key. Mohammed Ali abolished this inconvenience, but fined and imprisoned all night-walkers who carried no lanterns. See Pilgrimage, vol. i. 173.

4 As Kazi of the quarter he was ex-officio guardian of the orphans and their property, and liable to severe punishment (unless he could pay for the luxury) in case of fraud or neglect

5 Altogether six thousand dinars=£3,000. This sentence is borrowed from the sequel and necessary to make the sense clear.

6 *i.e.*, "I am going at once to complain of thee before the king unless thou give me due satisfaction by restoring the money and finding the thief."

an end of talk, when he turned to the officers and questioned them of that. They fixed the affair on me and said, "We know nothing of this matter but from Captain Mu'in al-Din." So the Kazi turned to me and said, "Thou wast of accord to practice upon me with this woman, for she said she came from the Citadel." As for me, I stood, with my head bowed ground-wards, forgetting both Sunnah and Farz,[1] and remained sunk in thought, saying, "How came I to be the dupe of that randy wench?" Then cried the Emir to me, "What aileth thee that thou answerest not?" Thereupon I replied, "O my lord, 'tis a custom among the folk that he who hath a payment to make at a certain date is allowed three days' grace: do thou have patience with me so long, and if, at the end of that time, the culprit be not found, I will be responsible for that which is lost." When the folk heard my speech they all approved it as reasonable, and the Wali turned to the Kazi and sware to him that he would do his utmost to recover the stolen monies, adding, "And they shall be restored to thee." Then he went away, whilst I mounted without stay or delay, and began to-ing and fro-ing about the world without purpose, and indeed I was become the underling of a woman without honesty or honour; and I went my rounds in this way all that my day and that my night, but happened not upon tidings of her; and thus I did on the morrow. On the third day I said to myself, "Thou art mad or silly"; for I was wandering in quest of a woman who knew me[2] and I knew her not, she being veiled when I met her. Then I went round about the third day till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, and sore waxed my cark and my care, for I kenned that there remained to me of my life but the morrow, when the Chief of Police would send for me. However, as sundown-time came, I passed through one of the main streets, and saw a woman at a window; her door was ajar and she was clapping her hands and casting sidelong glances at me, as who should say, "Come up by the door." So I went up, without fear or suspicion, and when I entered she rose and clasped me to her breast. I marvelled at the matter and quoth she to me, "I am she whom thou depositedst with Amin al-Hukm." Quoth I to her, "O my sister, I have been going round and round in request of thee, for indeed thou hast done a deed which will be chronicled and hast cast me into red death[3] on thine account." She asked

1 The Practice (of the Prophet) and the Holy Law (Koranic): see vol. i night xvii., vol. iii. night cccLxxiii., and vol. iv. night cccexxv.

2 In the corrupt text, "who knew me not"; thus spoiling the point.

3 Arab. "Maut Ahmar"=violent or bloody death. For the various coloured deaths, see vol. v. night dcxxi.

me, "Dost thou speak thus to me and thou a captain of men?" and I answered, "How should I not be troubled, seeing that I be in concern for an affair I turn over and over in mind, more by token that I continue my day long going about searching for thee and in the night I watch its stars and planets[1]?" Cried she, "Naught shall betide save weal, and thou shalt get the better of him.[2]" So saying, she rose and going to a chest, drew out therefrom six bags full of gold and said to me, "This is what I took from Amin al-Hukm's house. So an thou wilt, restore it; else the whole is lawfully[3] thine; and if thou desire other than this, thou shalt obtain it; for I have monies in plenty and I had no design herein save to marry thee." Then she arose, and opening other chests brought out therefrom wealth galore, and I said to her, "O my sister, I have no wish for all this, nor do I want aught except to be quit of that wherein I am." Quoth she, "I came not forth of the Kazi's house without preparing for thine acquittance." Then said she to me, "When the morrow shall morn and Amin al-Hukm shall come to thee, bear with him till he have made an end of his speech, and when he is silent, return him no reply; and if the Wali ask:—What aileth thee that thou answerest me not? do thou rejoin:—O lord and master[4] know that the two words are not alike, but there is no helper for the conquered one[5] save Allah Almighty. The Kazi will cry, What is the meaning of thy saying, The two words are not alike? And do thou retort:—I deposited with thee a damsel from the palace of the Sultan, and most likely some enemy of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her or she hath been secretly murdered. Verily, there were on her raiment and ornaments worth a thousand ducats, and hadst thou put to the question those who are with thee of slaves and slave-girls, needs must thou have litten on some traces of the crime. When he heareth this from thee, his trouble will redouble, and he will be amated and will make oath that thou hast no help for it but to go with him to his house: however, do thou say, That will I not do, for I am the party aggrieved, more especially because I am under suspicion with thee. If he

1 *i.e.*, for lack of sleep.

2 *i.e.*, of the Kazi.

3 Arab. "Mubáh," in the theologic sense, an action which is not sinful *(harâm)* or quasi-sinful *(makrûh)*; vulgarly "permitted, allowed"; so Shahrazad "ceased to say her say permitted" (by Shahryar).

4 Arab. "Yá Khawand"; see vol. vi night dcclviii.

5 *i.e.*, we both make different statements equally credible, but without proof, and the case will go against me because thou art the greater man.

redouble in calling on Allah's aid and conjure thee by the oath of divorce, saying, Thou must assuredly come, do thou reply, By Allah, I will not go, unless the Chief also go with me. Then, as soon as thou comest to the house, begin by searching the terrace-roofs; then rummage the closets and cabinets; and if thou find naught, humble thyself before the Kazi and be abject and feign thyself subjected, and after stand at the door and look as if thou soughtest a place wherein to make water,[1] because there is a dark corner there. Then come forward, with heart harder than syenite-stone, and lay hold upon a jar of the jars and raise it from its place. Thou wilt find there under it a mantilla-skirt; bring it out publicly and call the Wali in a loud voice, before those who are present. Then open it and thou wilt find it full of blood, exceeding for freshness, and therein a woman's walking boots and a pair of petticoat-trousers and somewhat of linen." When I heard from her these words, I rose to go out and she said to me, "Take these hundred sequins, so they may succour thee; and such is my guest-gift to thee." Accordingly, I took them and leaving her door ajar returned to my lodging. Next morning, up came the Judge, with his face like the ox-eye,[2] and asked, "In the name of Allah, where is my debtor and where is my property?" Then he wept and cried out and said to the Wali, "Where is that ill-omened fellow, who aboundeth in robbery and villainy?" Thereupon the Chief turned to me and said, "Why dost thou not answer the Kazi"; and I replied, "O Emir, the two heads[3] are not equal, and I, I have no helper[4]; but, an the right be on my side, 'twill appear." At this the Judge grew hotter of temper and cried out, "Woe to thee, O ill-omened wight! How wilt thou make manifest that the right is on thy side?" I replied, "O our lord the Kazi, I deposited with thee and in thy charge a woman whom we found at thy door, and on her raiment and ornaments of price. Now she is gone, even as yesterday is gone[5]; and after this thou turnest upon us and suest me for six thousand gold pieces. By Allah, this is none other than a mighty great wrong, and assuredly some foe[6] of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her!" With this the

1 Arab. "Irtiyád"=seeking a place soft and sloping, so that the spray may not defile the dress. All this in one word!

2 Arab. "Bahár," the red *buphthalmus sylvester*, often used for such comparisons. In Algeria it is called 'Aráwah: see the Jardin Parfumé, p. 245, note 144.

3 *i.e.*, parties.

4 *i.e.*, amongst men.

5 Almost as neat as "où sont les neiges d'antan?"

6 Arab. "Ádi," one transgressing, an enemy, a scoundrel.

Judge's wrath redoubled, and he swore by the most solemn of oaths that I should go with him and search his house. I replied, "By Allah I will not go, unless the Wali go with us; for, an he be present, he and the officers, thou wilt not dare to work thy wicked will upon me." So the Kazi rose and swore an oath, saying, "By the truth of Him who created mankind, we will not go but with the Emir!" Accordingly we repaired to the Judge's house, accompanied by the Chief, and going up, searched it through, but found naught; whereat fear fell upon me and the Wali turned to me and said, "Fie upon thee, O ill-omened fellow! thou hast put us to shame before the men." All this, and I wept and went round about right and left, with the tears running down my face, till we were about to go forth and drew near the door of the house. I looked at the place which the woman had mentioned and asked, "What is yonder dark place I see?" Then said I to the men, "Pull up[1] this jar with me." They did my bidding, and I saw somewhat appearing under the jar and said, "Rummage and look at what is under it." So they searched, and behold, they came upon a woman's mantilla and petticoat-trousers full of blood, which when I espied I fell down in a fainting-fit. Now when the Wali saw this, he said, "By Allah, the Captain is excused!" Then my comrades came round about me and sprinkled water on my face till I recovered, when I arose and accosting the Kazi (who was covered with confusion), said to him, "Thou seest that suspicion is fallen on thee, and indeed this affair is no light matter, because this woman's family will assuredly not sit down quietly under her loss." Therewith the Kazi's heart quaked and fluttered for that he knew the suspicion had reverted upon him, wherefore his colour yellowed and his limbs smote together; and he paid of his own money, after the measure of that he had lost, so we would quench th t fire for him.[2] Then we departed from him in peace, whilst I said within myself, "Indeed, the woman falsed me not." After that I tarried till three days had passed, when I went to the Hammam and, changing my clothes, betook myself to her home, but found the door shut and covered with dust. So I asked the neighbours of her and they answered, "This house hath been empty of habitants these many days; but three days agone there came a woman with an ass, and at supper-time last night she took her gear and went away." Hereat I turned back, bewildered in my wit, and for many a day after I enquired of the dwellers in

1 It was probably stuck in the ground like an amphora.
2 *i.e.*, hush up the matter.

that street concerning her, but could happen on no tidings of her. And indeed I wondered at the eloquence of her tongue and the readiness of her talk; and this is the most admirable of all I have seen and of whatso hath betided me. When Al-Malik al-Zahir heard the tale of Mu'in al-Din, he marvelled thereat. Then rose another constable and said, "O lord, hear what befell me in bygone days."

THE SECOND CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

I WAS once an overseer in the household of the Emir Jamál al-Din al-Atwash al-Mujhidi, who was made governor of the two provinces, Sharkíyah and Gharbíyah,[1] and I was dear to his heart and he hid from me naught of whatso he desired to do; and he was eke master of his reason.[2] It came to pass one day of the days that it was reported to him how the daughter of Such-an-one had a mint of monies and raiment and ornaments, and at that present she loved a Jewish man, whom every day she invited to be private with her, and they passed the light hours eating and drinking in company and he lay the night with her. The Wali feigned not to believe a word of this story, but he summoned the watchmen of the quarter one night and questioned them of this tittle-tattle. Quoth one of them, "As for me, O my lord, I saw none save a Jew[3] enter the street in question one night; but I have not made certain to whom he went in"; and quoth the Chief, "Keep thine eye on him from this time forward and note what place he entereth." So the watchman went out and kept his eye on the Judæan. One day, as the Prefect sat in his house, the watchman came in to him and said, "O my lord, in very sooth the Jew goeth to the house of Such-an-one." Whereupon Al-Atwash sprang to his feet and went forth alone, taking with him none save myself.[4] As he went along, he said to me,

1 In Egypt; the former being the Eastern of the Seven Provinces extending to the Pelusium branch, and the latter to the Canobic. The "Barári," or deserts, *i.e.*, grounds not watered by the Nile, lie scattered between the two, and both are bounded South by the Kalúbíyah Province and Middle Egypt.

2 *i.e.*, a man ready of wit and immediate of action, as opposed to his name Al-Atwash = one notable for levity of mind.

3 The negative is emphatic: "I certainly saw a Jew," etc.

4 The "Irish bull" is in the text; justified by—

They hand-in-hand, with wandering steps and slow
Through Eden took their solitary way.

"Indeed, this girl is a fat piece of meat.[1]" And we gave not over going till we came to the door of the house and stood there until a hand-maid came out, as if to buy them something wanted. We waited till she opened the door,[2] whereupon, without question or answer, we forced our way into the house and rushed in upon the girl, whom we found seated with the Jew in a saloon with four daïses, and cooking-pots and candles therein. When her eyes fell on the Wali, she knew him and rising to her feet, said, "Well come and welcome and fair cheer! By Allah, great honour hath betided me by my lord's visit and indeed thou dignifiest my dwelling." Hereat she carried him up to the daïs and, seating him on the couch, brought him meat and wine and gave him to drink; after which she put off all that was upon her of raiment and ornaments and tying them up in a kerchief, said to him, "O my lord, this is thy portion, all of it." Then she turned to the Jew and said to him, "Rise, thou also, and do even as I": so he arose in haste and went out very hardly crediting his deliverance.[3] When the girl was assured of his escape, she put out her hand to her clothes and jewels and, taking them, said to the Chief, "O Emir, is the requital of kindness other than kindness? Thou hast deigned to visit me and eat of my bread and salt; so now arise and depart from us without ill-doing; or I will give a single outcry, and all who are in the street will come forth." So the Emir went out from her, without having gotten a single dirham; and on this wise she delivered the Jew by the seemliness of her stratagem. The company admired this tale, and as for the Wali and Al-Malik al-Zahir, they said, "Ever devised any the like of this device?" and they marvelled with the utterest of marvel. Then arose a third constable and said, "Hear what betided me, for it is yet stranger and rarer."

THE THIRD CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

I was one day abroad on business with certain of my comrades; and, as we walked along, behold we fell in with a company of

1 As we should say, "There are good pickings to be had out of this job." Even in the last generation a Jew or a Christian intriguing with an Egyptian or Syrian Moslemah would be offered the choice of death or Al-Islam.

2 The Wali dared not break open the door because he was not sure of his game.

3 The Jew rose seemingly to fetch his valuables and ran away, thus leaving the Wali no proof that he had been there; as Moslem law, which demands ocular testimony, rejects circumstantial evidence and ignores such partial witnesses as the policeman who accompanied his Chief. This I have before explained.

women, as they were moons, and among them one, the tallest of them and the handsomest. When I saw her and she saw me, she lagged behind her companions and waited for me till I came up to her and bespake her. Quoth she, "O my lord (Allah favour thee!) I saw thee prolong thy looking on me and I fancied that thou knewest me. An it be thus, let me learn more of thee." Quoth I, "By Allah, I know thee not, save that the Most High Lord hath cast the love of thee into my heart, and the goodliness of thy qualities hath confounded me; and that wherewith the Almighty hath gifted thee of those eyes that shoot with shafts hath captivated me." And she rejoined, "By Allah, indeed I feel the like of that which thou feelest; ay, and even more; so that meseemeth I have known thee from childhood." Then said I, "A man cannot well effect all whereof he hath need in the market-places." She asked me, "Hast thou a house?" and I answered, "No, by Allah, nor is this city my dwelling-place." Rejoined she, "By Allah, nor have I a place; but I will contrive for thee." Then she went on before me and I followed her till she came to a lodging-house[1] and said to the Housekeeper, "Hast thou an empty room?" The other replied, "Yes[2]": and my mistress said, "Give us the key." So we took the key and going up to see the room, entered to inspect it; after which she went out to the Housekeeper and giving her a dirham, said to her, "Take the *douceur* of the key[3] for the chamber pleaseth us, and here is another dirham for thy trouble. Go, fetch us a gugglet of water, so we may refresh ourselves and rest till siesta-time pass and the heat decline, when the man will depart and bring our bag and baggage." Therewith the Housekeeper rejoiced and brought us a mat, two gugglets of water on a tray, a fan and a leather rug. We abode thus till the setting-in of mid-afternoon, when she said, "Needs must I make the Ghusl-ablution ere I fare." Said I, "Get water wherewith we may both wash," and drew forth from my pocket a score or so of dirhams, thinking to give them to her; but she cried, "Refuge with Allah!" and brought out of her pocket a handful of silver, saying, "But for destiny and that the Almighty hath caused the love of thee fall into my heart, there had not happened that which hath happened."

1 Arab. "Raba'," lit. = spring-quarters. See Marba', vol. ii. night cxlii.

2 Arab. "Ni'am," an exception to the Abbé Sicard's rule. "La consonne N est l'expression naturelle du doute chez toutes les nations, par ce que le son que rend la touche nasale, quand l'homme incertain examine s'il fera ce qu'on lui demande; ainsi NE ON, NE OT, NE EC, NE IL, d'où l'on a fait *non, not, nec, nil.*"

3 For this "Haláwat al-Miftáh," or sweetmeat of the key-money, the French *denier à Dieu*, Old English "God's penny," see vol. v. night dccxx, and Pilgrimage, i. 62.

Quoth I, "Accept this in requital of that which thou hast spent"; and quoth she, "O my lord, by-and-by, whenas mating is prolonged between us, thou wilt see if the like of me looketh unto money and means or no." Then the lady took a jar of water and going into the lavatory, made the Ghusl-ablution[1] and presently coming forth, prayed the mid-afternoon prayer and craved pardon of Allah Almighty for the sin into which she had fallen. Now I had asked her name and she answered, "Rayhánah,[2]" and described to me her dwelling-place. When I saw her make the ablution, I said within myself, "This woman doth on this wise, and shall I not do the like of her doing?" Then quoth I to her, "Peradventure[3] thou wilt seek us another jar of water?" Accordingly she went out to the Housekeeper and said to her, "O my sister, take this Nusf and fetch us for it water wherewith we may wash the flags.[4]" So the Housekeeper brought two jars of water, and I took one of them and, giving her my clothes, entered the lavatory and bathed. When I had made an end of bathing, I cried out, saying, "Harkye, my lady Rayhanah!" However, none answered me. So I went out and found her not; but I did find that she had taken my clothes and all that was in them of silver, to wit, four hundred dirhams. She had also carried off my turband and my kerchief, and I lacked the wherewithal to veil my shame; so I suffered somewhat than which death is less grievous, and bode looking about the place, hoping that haply I might espy a rag wherewith to hide my nakedness. Then I sat a little and presently going up to the door, smote upon it; whereat up came the Housekeeper and I said to her, "O my sister, what hath Allah done with the woman who was here?" She replied, "The lady came down just now and said:—I'm going to cover the boys with the clothes, adding, and I have left him sleeping; an he awake, tell him not to stir till the clothes come to him." Then cried I, "O my sister, secrets are safe with the fair-dealing and the freeborn. By Allah, this woman is not my wife, nor ever in my life have I seen her before this day!" And I recounted to her the whole affair and begged of her to cover me, informing her that my whole person was clean unconcealed. She laughed and cried out to the women of the lodging-house, saying, "Ho, Fátimah! Ho, Khadíjah! Ho, Harífah! Ho,

1 For its rules and right performance see vol. iv. night ccccxl.

2 *i.e.*, the "Basil (issa)," mostly a servile name, see vol. i. page 17.

3 Arab. "La'alla," used to express the hope or expectation of some event of possible occurrence; thus distinguished from "Layta"—Would heaven! utinam! O si! etc.—expressing desire or volition.

4 Arab. "Balát," in Cairo the flat slabs of limestone and sandstone brought from the Turah quarries, which supplied stone for the Jizah Pyramids.

Sanínah!" Whereupon all those who were in the place of women and neighbours flocked to me, and fell a-mocking me and saying, "O pimp,[1] what hadst thou to do with gallantry?" Then one of them came and looked in my face and laughed, and another said, "By Allah, thou mightest have known that she lied, from the time she said she liked thee and was in love with thee? What is there in thee to love?" A third said, "This is an old man without wisdom"; and all vied one with other in exercising their wits upon me, I suffering mighty sore chagrin. However, one of the women took compassion on me after a while, and brought me a rag of thin stuff and cast it on me. With this I covered my shame, and no more, and abode awhile thus: then said I in myself, "The husbands of these women will presently gather together upon me and I shall be disgraced." So I went out by another door of the lodging-house, and young and old crowded about me, running after me and crying, "A madman! A madman[2]!" till I came to my house and knocked at the door; whereupon out came my wife and seeing me naked, tall, bare of head, cried out and ran in again, saying, "This is a maniac, a Satan!" But, when my family and spouse knew me, they rejoiced and said to me, "What aileth thee?" I told them that thieves had taken my clothes and stripped me and had been like to slay me; and when I assured them that the rogues would have slaughtered me, they praised Allah Almighty and gave me joy of my safety. So consider the craft this woman practised upon me, and I pretending to cleverness and wiliness. Those present marvelled at this story and at the doings of women; then came forward a fourth constable and said, "Now that which hath befided me of strange adventures is yet stranger than this; and 'twas after the following fashion."

THE FOURTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

We were sleeping one night on the terrace-roof, when a woman made her way through the darkness into the house and, gathering into a bundle all that was therein, took it up that she might go away with it. Now she was big with child and nigh upon her

1 Arab. "Yá Mu'arras!" here=O fool and disreputable; see vol. i. night xxxiii.

2 These unfortunates in hot climates enjoy nothing so much as throwing off the clothes which burn their feverish skins: see Pilgrimage, iii. 385. Hence the boys of Eastern cities, who are perfect imps and flibbertigibbets, always raise the cry "Majnún" when they see a man naked whose sanctity does not account for his nudity.

time of delivery; so, when she packed up the bundle and prepared to shoulder it and make off with it, she hastened the coming of the labour-pangs and bare a child in the dark. Then she sought for the fire-sticks and, when they burned, kindled the lamp and went round about the house with the little one, and it was weeping. The wail awoke us, as we lay on the roof, and we marvelled. So we rose to see what was to do, and looking down through the opening of the saloon,[1] saw a woman, who had lit the lamp, and heard the little one crying. As we were peering, she heard our words and raising her head to us, said, "Are ye not ashamed to deal thus with us and bare our shame? Wist ye not that the day belongeth to you and the night to us? Begone from us! By Allah, were it not that ye have been my neighbours these many years, I would assuredly[2] bring down the house upon you!" We doubted not but that she was of the Jinn and drew back our heads; but, when we rose on the morrow, we found that she had taken all that was with us and made off with it[3]; wherefore we knew that she was a thief and had practised on us a device, such as was never before practised; and we repented, whenas repentance availed us naught. The company, hearing this tale, marvelled thereat with the utmost marvelling. Then the fifth constable, who was the lieutenant of the bench,[4] came forward and said, "This is no wonder and there befell me a story which is rarer and stranger than this."

THE FIFTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

As I sat one day at the door of the Prefecture, behold, a woman suddenly entered and said, as though consulting me, "O my

1 Arab. "Daur al-Ká'ah"=the round opening made in the ceiling for light and ventilation.

2 Arab. "La-nakhsifanna" with the emphatic termination called by grammarians "Nún al-taakid"—the N of injunction. Here it is the reduplicated form, the Nun al-Sakílah or heavy N. The addition of Lá (not) *e.g.*, "Lá yazrabanna"=let him certainly not strike, answers to the intensive or corroborative negative of the Greek effected by two negations or even more. In Arabic, as in Latin and English, two negatives make an affirmative.

3 Parturition and death in warm climates, especially the damp-hot like Egypt, are easy compared with both processes in the temperates of Europe. This is noticed by every traveller. Hence probably Easterns have never studied the artificial Euthanasia which is now appearing in literature. See p 143, "My Path to Atheism," by Annie Besant, London: Freethought Publishing Company, 28, Stonecutter Street, E.C, 1877; based upon the Utopia of the highly religious Thomas Moore. Also "Essay on Euthanasia," by P. D. Williams, Jun, and Mr. Tollemache in the "Nineteenth Century."

4 *i.e.*, he whose turn it is to sit on the bench outside the police-office in readiness for emergencies.

lord, I am the wife of Such-an-one the Leach, and with him is a company of the notables[1] of the city, drinking fermented drinks in such a place." When I heard this, I misliked to make a scandal; so I bluffed her off and sent her away unsatisfied. Then I rose and walked alone to the place in question, and sat without till the door opened, when I rushed in and entering, found the company even as the woman aforesaid had set out and she herself with them. I saluted them and they returned my salam and rising, treated me with honour and seated me and served me with meat. Then I informed them how one had denounced them to me, but I had driven him away and had come to them by myself; so they thanked me and praising me for my kindness, brought out to me from among them two thousand dirhams,[2] and I took them and went away. Now two months after this adventure, there came to me one of the Kazi's officers, with a paper, wherein was the judge's writ, summoning me to him. So I accompanied the officer and went into the Kazi, whereupon the plaintiff, he who had taken out the summons, sued me for two thousand dirhams, declaring I had borrowed them of him as the agent or guardian of the woman. I denied the debt, but he produced against me a bond for that sum, attested by four of those who were in company on the occasion; and they were present and bore witness to the loan. I reminded them of my kindness and paid the amount, swearing that I would never again follow a woman's counsel. Is not this marvellous? The company admired the goodliness of his tale, and it pleased Al-Malik al-Zahir; and the Wali said, "By Allah, this is a strange story!" Then came forward the sixth constable and said to those present, "Hear my adventure and that which befell me, to wit, that which befell Such-an-one the Assessor, for 'tis rarer than this and finer."

THE SIXTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

A CERTAIN Assessor one day of the days was taken with a woman, and much people assembled before his house, and the Lieutenant of police and his posse came to him and rapped at the door. The Assessor peered from house-top and seeing the folk, said, "What

1 Arab. "'Udúl" (plur. of 'Ádil), gen. men of good repute, qualified as witnesses in the law-court, see vol. iii. night cccxliii. It is also used (as below) for the Kazi's Assessors.

2 About £80.

do ye want?" Replied they, "Speak with the Lieutenant of police, Such-an-one." So he came down, and as he opened the door they cried to him, "Bring forth the woman who is with thee." "Are ye not ashamed? How shall I bring forth my wife?" "Is she thy wife by book[1] or without marriage-lines?" "She is my wife according to the Book of Allah and the Institutes of His Apostle." "Where is the contract?" "Her lines are in her mother's house." "Arise thou and come down and show us the writ." "Go from her way, so she may come forth." Now, as soon as he got wind of the matter, he had written the bond and fashioned it after the fashion of his wife,[2] to suit with the case, and he had written therein the names of certain of his friends to serve as witnesses, and forged the signatures of the drawer and the wife's next friend, and made it a contract of marriage with his wife and a legal deed.[3] Accordingly, when the woman was about to go out from him, he gave her the contract he had forged, and the Emir sent with her a servant of his, to carry her home to her father. So the servant went with her and when she was inside, she said to him, "I will not return to the citation of the Emir; but let the Assessors present themselves and take my contract." Hereupon the servant carried this message to the Lieutenant of police, who was standing at the Assessor's door, and he said, "This is permissible." Then said the Assessor to the servant, "Fare, O eunuch, and fetch us Such-an-one the Notary"; for that he was his friend, and 'twas he whose name he had forged as the drawer-up of the contract.[4] So the Lieutenant sent after him and fetched him to the Assessor, who, when he saw him, said to him, "Get thee to Such-an-one, her with whom thou marriedst me, and cry out upon her, and when she cometh to thee,[5] demand of her the contract and take it from her and bring it to us." And he signed to him, as much as to say, "Bear me out in the lie and screen me, for that she is a strange woman and I[6] am in fear of the Lieutenant who standeth at the door; and we beseech Allah Almighty to screen us and you from the woes of this world. Amen." So

1 Arab. "Kitáb" = book, written bond. This officiousness of the neighbours is thoroughly justified by Moslem custom; and the same scene would take place in this our day. Like the Hindú's, but in a minor degree, the Moslem's neighbours form a volunteer police which oversees his every action. In the case of the Hindú this is required by the exigencies of caste.

2 *e.g.*, writing, The contract of A. with B., daughter of Such-an-one, etc.

3 Arab. "Hujjat," which may also mean an excuse.

4 The last clause is supplied by Mr. Payne to stop a gap in the broken text.

5 The text idiotically says, "To the King."

6 In the text "Nahnu" = we, for I; a common vulgarism in Egypt and Syria.

the Notary went up to the Lieutenant, who was among the witnesses, and said, "'Tis well. Is she not Such-an-one whose marriage-contract we drew up in such a place?" Then he betook himself to the woman's house and cried out upon her; whereat she brought him the forged contract and he took it and returned with it to the Lieutenant of police.[1] When the officer had taken cognizance of the document and professed himself satisfied, the Assessor said to the Notary, "Go to our lord and master, the Kazi of the Kazis, and acquaint him with that which befalleth his Assessors." The Notary rose to go, but the Lieutenant feared for himself and was urgent in beseeching the Assessor and in kissing his hands till he forgave him; whereupon the Lieutenant went away in the utmost concern and affright. On such wise the Assessor ordered the case and carried out the forgery and feigned marriage with the woman; and thus escaped calumny and calamity by the seemliness of his stratagem.[2] The folk marvelled at this with the uttermost marvel and the seventh constable said:—There befell me in Alexandria the God-guarded a wondrous thing, and 'twas this.[3]

THE SEVENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

THERE came one day an old woman to the stuff-bazar, with a casket of mighty fine workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a young baggage big with child. The crone sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the girl was pregnant by the Prefect[4] of Police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. She opened the casket and showed him that which was therein and he found it full of trinkets of price; so he trusted her with the goods and she farewelled him, and carrying the stuffs to the girl who was with her, went her way. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper

1 This clause has required extensive trimming; the text making the Notary write out the contract (which was already written) in the woman's house.

2 Arab. "Husn tadbír"=lit "beauty of his contrivance." Husn, like καλὸς, pulcher, beau and bello, is applied to moral and intellectual qualities as well as to physical and material. Hence the καλὸ γέρων, or old gentleman, which in Romaic becomes Calogero, a monk.

3 *i.e.*, that some one told me the following tale.

4 Arab. "Mutawalli". see vol i. night xxv.

despaired of her; so he went up to the Prefect's house and asked anent the woman of his household who had taken his stuffs on credit; but could obtain no tidings of her nor happen on any trace of her. Then he brought out the casket of jewellery and showed it to experts, who told him that the trinkets were gilt and that their worth was but an hundred dirhams. When he heard this, he was sore concerned thereat and presenting himself before the Deputy of the Sultan made his complaint to him; whereupon the official knew that a sleight had been served upon him, and that the sons of Adam[1] had cozened him and conquered him and cribbed his stuffs. Now the magistrate in question was a man of experience and judgment, well versed in affairs; so he said to the draper, "Remove somewhat from thy shop, including the casket, and to-morrow morning break the lock and cry out and come to me and complain that they have plundered all thy shop.[2] Also mind thou call upon Allah for aid, and wail aloud and acquaint the people, so that a world of folk may flock to thee and sight the breach of the lock and that which is missing from thy shop: and on this wise display it to every one who presenteth himself that the news may be noised abroad, and tell them that thy chief concern is for a casket of great value, deposited with thee by a great man of the town, and that thou standest in fear of him. But be thou not afraid, and still say ever and anon in thy saying:—My casket was the casket of Such-an-one, and I fear him and dare not bespeak him; but you, O company and all ye who are present, I call you to witness of this for me. And if there be with thee more than this saying, say it; and the old woman will assuredly come to thee." The draper answered with "To hear is to obey," and going forth from the Deputy's presence, betook himself to his shop and brought out thence the casket and a somewhat making a great display, which he removed to his house. At break of day he arose and going to his shop, broke the lock and shouted and shrieked and called on Allah for aid, till each and every of the folk assembled about him, and all who were in the city were present, whereupon he cried out to them, saying even as the Prefect had bidden him; and this was bruited abroad. Then he made for the Prefecture, and presenting himself before the Chief of Police, cried out and complained, and made a show of distraction. After three days

1 *i.e.*, his Moslem neighbours.
2 In the text is a fearful confusion of genders.

the old woman came to him and bringing him the thousand dinars, the price of the stuffs, demanded the casket.[1] When he saw her, he seized her and carried her to the Prefect of the city; and when she came before the Kazi, he said to her, "Woe to thee O Sataness! did not thy first deed suffice thee, but thou must come a second time?" She replied, "I am of those who seek their salvation[2] in the cities, and we foregather every month; and yesterday we foregathered." He asked her, "Canst thou cause me to catch them?" and she answered, "Yes; but, an thou wait till to-morrow, they will have dispersed; so I will deliver them to thee to-night." The Emir said to her, "Go"; and said she, "Send with me one who shall go with me to them and obey me in whatso I shall say to him, and all that I bid him he shall not gainsay and therein conform to my way." Accordingly, he gave her a company of men, and she took them, and bringing them to a certain door, said to them, "Stand ye here, at this door, and whoso cometh out to you, seize him; and I will come out to you last of all." "Hearing and obeying," answered they, and stood at the door whilst the crone went in. They waited a whole hour, even as the Sultan's deputy had bidden them, but none came out to them, and their standing waxed longsome, and when they were weary of waiting, they went up to the door and smote upon it a heavy blow and a violent, so that they came nigh to break the wooden bolt. Then one of them entered and was absent a long while, but found naught; so he returned to his comrades and said to them, "This is the door of a dark passage, leading to such a thoroughfare; and indeed she laughed at you and left you and went away.[3]" When they heard his words, they returned to the Emir and acquainted him with the case, whereby he knew that the old woman was a cunning craft-mistress, and that she had mocked at them and cozened them and put a cheat on them to save herself. Witness, then, the wiles of this woman and that which she contrived of guile, for all her lack of foresight in presenting herself a second time to the draper and not suspecting that his conduct was but a sleight; yet, when she found

1 Her object was to sue him for the loss of the pledge, and to demand fabulous damages.

2 Arab. "Ya'tamidúna hudà-hum"=purpose the right direction, a skit at the devotees of her age and sex; and an impudent comment upon the Prefect's address, "O she-devil!"

3 The trick has often been played in modern times at fairs, shows, etc. Witness the old Joe Miller of the "Moving Multitude."

herself hard upon calamity, she straightway devised a device for her deliverance. When the company heard the seventh constable's story, they were moved to mirth galore, than which naught could be more; and Al-Malik al-Zahir Bibars rejoiced in that which he heard and said, "Verily, there betide things in this world wherefrom kings are shut out by reason of their exalted degree!" Then came forward another person from amongst the company and said, "There hath reached me through one of my friends a similar story bearing on the malice of women and their wiles, and it is more wondrous and marvellous, more diverting and more delectable, than all that hath been told to you." Quoth the company there present, "Tell us thy tale and expound it unto us, so we may see that which it hath of extraordinary." And he began to relate

THE EIGHTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

Ye must know that a company, amongst whom was a friend of mine, once invited me to an entertainment; so I went with him, and when we came into his house and sat down on his couch, he said to me, "This is a blessed day and a day of gladness, and who is he that liveth to see the like of this day? I desire that thou practise with us and disapprove not our proceedings, for that thou hast been accustomed to fall in with those who offer this.[1]" I consented thereto and their talk happened upon the like of this subject.[2] Presently, my friend, who had invited me, arose from among them and said to them, "Listen to me and I will acquaint you with an adventure which happened to me. There was a certain person who used to visit me in my shop, and I knew him not nor he knew me, nor ever in his life had he seen me; but he was wont, whenever he wanted a dirnam or two, by way of loan, to come to me and ask me, without acquaintance or introduction between me and him, and I would give him what he required. I told none of him, and matters abode thus between us a long while till he began a-borrowing at a time ten or twenty dirhams, more or less. One day, as I stood in my shop, behold, a woman suddenly came up to me and stopped before me; and she was a presence as she

1 Apparently meaning the forbidden pleasures of wine and wassail, loose talk and tales of women's wiles, a favourite subject with the lewder sort of Moslem.

2 *i.e.*, women's tricks.

were the full moon rising from among the constellations, and the place was a-light by her light. When I saw her, I fixed my eyes on her and stared in her face; and she fell to bespeaking me with soft voice. When I heard her words and the sweetness of her speech, I lusted after her; and as soon as she saw that I longed for her, she did her errand and, promising me an assignation, went away, leaving my thoughts occupied with her and fire a-flame in my heart. Accordingly I abode, perplexed and pondering my affair, the fire still burning in my heart, till the third day, when she came again and I could hardly credit her coming. When I saw her, I talked with her and cajoled her and courted her and craved her favour with speech and invited her to my house; but, hearing all this, she only answered, "I will not go up into any one's house." Quoth I, "I will go with thee," and quoth she, "Arise and come with me." So I rose and putting into my sleeve a kerchief, wherein was a fair sum of silver and a considerable, followed the woman, who forewent me and ceased not walking till she brought me to a lane and to a door, which she bade me unlock. I refused and she opened it and led me into the vestibule. As soon as I had entered, she bolted the entrance door from within and said to me, "Sit here till I go in to the slave-girls and cause them enter a place whence they shall not see me." "'Tis well," answered I, and sat down: whereupon she entered and was absent from me an eye-twinkling, after which she returned to me, without a veil, and straightway said, "Arise and enter in the name of Allah." So I arose and went in after her and we gave not over going till we reached a saloon. When I examined the place, I found it neither handsome nor pleasant, but desolate and dreadful, without symmetry or cleanliness; indeed, it was loathsome to look upon and there was in it a foul smell. After this inspection I seated myself amiddlemost the saloon, misdoubting; and lo and behold! as I sat, there came down on me from the daïs a body of seven naked men, without other clothing than leathern belts about their waists. One of them walked up to me and took my turband, whilst another seized my kerchief that was in my sleeve, with my money, and a third stripped me of my clothes; after which a fourth came and bound my hands behind my back with his belt. Then they all took me up, pinioned as I was, and casting me down, fell a-haling me towards a sink-hole that was there, and were about to cut my throat, when suddenly there came a violent knocking at the door. As they heard the raps they were afraid, and their minds were diverted from me by affright; so the woman went out and presently returning, said to them, "Fear not; no

harm shall betide you this day. 'Tis only your comrade who hath brought you your dinner." With this the new-comer entered, bringing with him a roasted lamb; and when he came in to them, he asked, "What is to do with you that ye have tucked up sleeves and bag-trousers?" Replied they, "This is a head of game we've caught." As he heard these words, he came up to me, and peering in my face, cried out and said, "By Allah, this is my brother, the son of my mother and father! Allah! Allah!" Then he loosed me from my pinion-bonds and bussed my head, and behold it was my friend who used to borrow silver of me. When I kissed his head, he kissed mine and said, "O my brother, be not affrighted"; and he called for my clothes and coin and restored all to me nor was aught missing. Also, he brought me a porcelain bowl full of sherbet of sugar, with lemons therein, and gave me to drink; and the company came and seated me at a table. So I ate with them and he said to me, "O my lord and my brother, now have bread and salt passed between us, and thou hast discovered our secret and our case; but secrets with the noble are safe." I replied, "As I am a lawfully-begotten child and a well-born, I will not name aught of this nor denounce you!" They assured themselves of me by an oath; then they brought me out and I went my way, very hardly crediting but that I was of the dead. I lay ill in my house a whole month; after which I went to the Hammam and coming out, opened my shop and set selling and buying as was my wont, but saw no more of that man or of that woman till, one day, there stopped before my shop a young Turkoman,[1] as he were the full moon; and he was a sheep-merchant, and had with him a leathern bag, wherein was money, the price of sheep he had sold. He was followed by the woman, and when he stopped over against my shop, she stood by his side and cajoled him, and indeed he inclined to her with great inclination. As for me, I was dying of solicitude for him and began casting furtive glances at him and winked at him, till he chanced to look round and saw me signing to him; whereupon the woman gazed at me and made a signal with her hand and went away. The Turkoman followed her, and I deemed him dead without a doubt; wherefore I feared with exceeding fear and shut my shop. Then I journeyed for a year's space and returning, opened my shop; whereupon, behold, the woman as she walked by came up to me and said, "This is none other than a great

1 The "Turkoman" in the text first comes in afterwards.

absence." I replied, "I have been on a journey"; and she asked, "Why didst thou wink at the Turkoman?" I answered, "Allah forfend! I did not wink at him." Quoth she, "Beware lest thou thwart me"; and went away. Awhile after this a familiar of mine invited me to his house, and when I came to him we ate and drank and chatted. Then he asked me, "O my friend, hath there befallen thee aught of sore trouble in the length of thy life?" Answered I, "Tell me first, hath there befallen thee aught?" He rejoined:—Know that one day I espied a fair woman; so I followed her and sued her to come home with me. Quoth she, I will not enter any one's house but my own; so come thou to my home, an thou wilt, and be it on such a day. Accordingly, on the appointed day, her messenger[1] came to me, proposing to carry me to her; and when he announced his purpose I arose and went with him, till we arrived at a goodly house and a great door. He opened the door and I entered, whereupon he bolted it behind me and would have gone in; but I feared with exceeding fear and foregoing him to the second door, whereby he would have had me enter, bolted it and cried out at him, saying, "By Allah, an thou open not to me, I will slay thee[2]; for I am none of those whom thou canst readily cozen!" "What deemest thou of cozening?" "Verily, I am startled by the loneliness of the house and the lack of any keeper at its door; for I see none appear." "O my lord, this is a private door." "Private or public, open to me." So he opened to me and I went out and had gone but a little way from the door when I met a woman, who said to me, "A long life was fore-ordained to thee; else hadst thou never come forth of yonder house." I asked, "How so?" and she answered, "Enquire of thy friend Such-an-one" (naming thee), "and he will acquaint thee with strange things." So, Allah upon thee, O my friend, tell me what befell thee of wondrous and marvellous, for I have told thee what befell me." "O my brother, I am bound by a solemn oath." "O my friend, false thine oath and tell me.[3]" "Indeed, I dread the issue of this." But he urged me till I told him all, whereat he marvelled. Then I went away from him and abode a long while, without

1 Arab. "Kásid," the old Anglo-Indian "Cossid": see vol. vi. night dcclxvi.

2 Being a merchant he wore dagger and sword, a safe practice as it deters attack, and far better than carrying hidden weapons, derringers and revolvers which, originating in the United States, have now been adopted by the most civilised nations in Europe.

3 I have noted (vol. ii. night lxxv., iii. night cccix.) the easy expiation of perjury amongst Moslems, an ugly blot in their moral code.

further news. One day, I met another of my friends who said to me, "A neighbour of mine hath invited me to hear singers," but I said:—"I will not foregather with any one." However, he prevailed upon me; so we repaired to the place and found there a person, who came to meet us and said, "Bismillah[1]!" Then he pulled out a key and opened the door, whereupon we entered and he locked the door after us. Quoth I, "We are the first of the folk; but where be the singers' voices?" He replied, "They're within the house: this is but a private door; so be not amazed at the absence of the folk." My friend said to me, "Behold, we are two, and what can they dare to do with us?" Then he brought us into the house, and when we entered the saloon, we found it desolate exceedingly and dreadful of aspect. Quoth my friend, "We are fallen into a trap; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" And quoth I, "May God never requite thee for me with good!" Then we sat down on the edge of the dais, and suddenly I espied a closet beside me; so I peered into it and my friend asked me, "What seest thou?" I answered, "I see there wealth in store and corpses of murdered men galore. Look." So he looked and cried, "By Allah, we are down among the dead!" and we fell a-weeping, I and he. As we were thus, behold, four men came in upon us, by the door at which we had entered, and they were naked, wearing only leathern belts about their waists, and made for my friend. He ran at them, and dealing one of them a blow with his sword-pommel, knocked him down, whereupon the other three rushed upon him. I seized the opportunity to escape while they were occupied with him, and espying a door by my side, slipped into it and found myself in an underground room, without issue, even a window. So I made sure of death, and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then I looked at the top of the vault and saw in it a range of glazed and coloured lunettes[2]; so I clambered up for dear life, till I reached the lunettes, and I out of my wits for fear. I made

1 *i.e.*, enter in the name of Allah

2 Arab. "Saff Kamariyát min al-Zujáj." The Kamariyah is derived by Lane (Introd. M.E.) from Kamar=moon; by Baron Von Hammer from Khumárawayh, second of the Banu-Tulún dynasty, at the end of the ninth century A D, when stained glass was introduced into Egypt. N.B.—It must date from many centuries before. The Kamariyah are coloured glass windows about 2 feet high by 18 inches wide, placed in a row along the upper part of the Mashrabiyah or projecting lattice-window, and are formed of small panes of brightly-stained glass set in rims of gypsum-plaster, the whole framed in wood. Here the allusion is to the "Mamrak" or dome-shaped skylight crowning the room. See vol. v. night lcccxxxv.

shift to remove the glass and scrambling out through the setting, found behind them a wall which I bestrode. Thence I saw folk walking in the street; so I cast myself down to the ground and Allah Almighty preserved me, and when I reached the face of earth, unhurt, the folk flocked round me, and I acquainted them with my adventure. Now as Destiny decreed, the Chief of Police was passing through the market-street; so the people told him what was to do and he made for the door and bade raise it off its hinges. We entered with a rush and found the thieves, as they had thrown my friend down and cut his throat; for they occupied not themselves with me, but said, "Whither shall yonder fellow wend? Verily, he is in our grasp." So the Wali hent them with the hand[1] and questioned them of their case, and they confessed against the woman and against their associates in Cairo. Then he took them and went forth, after he had locked up the house and sealed it; and I accompanied him till he came without the first house. He found the door bolted from within; so he bade raise it and we entered and found another door. This also he caused pull up, enjoining his men to silence till the doors should be lifted, and we entered and found the band occupied with new game, whom the woman had just brought in and whose throat they were about to cut. The Chief released the man and gave him back whatso the thieves had taken from him; and he laid hands on the woman and the rest and took forth of the house a mint of money, with which they found the purse of the Turkoman sheep-merchant. They at once nailed up the thieves against the house-wall, whilst, as for the woman, they wrapped her in one of her mantillas and nailing her to a board, set her upon a camel and went round about the town with her. Thus Allah razed their dwelling-places and did away from me that which I feared from them. All this befell, whilst I looked on, and I saw not my friend who had saved me from them the first time, whereat I wondered to the utterest of wonderment. However, some days afterward, he came up to me, and indeed he had renounced the world and donned a Fakir's dress; and he saluted me and went away.[2] Then he again began to pay me frequent visits, and I entered into conversation with him and questioned him of the band and how he came to escape, he alone of them all. He replied, "I left them from the day on which Allah the Most High delivered thee from them, for that

1 *i.e.*, easily arrested them.

2 The reader will not forget the half-penitent Captain of Bandits in Gil Blas.

they would not obey my say; so I sware I would no longer consort with them." Quoth I, "By Allah, I marvel at thee, for that assuredly thou wast the cause of my preservation!" Quoth he, "The world is full of this sort; and we beseech the Almighty to send us safety, for that these wretches practise upon men with every kind of malpractice." Then said I to him, "Tell me the rarest adventure of all that befell thee in this villainy thou wast wont to work." And he answered, "O my brother, I was not present when they did such deeds, for that my part with them was to concern myself with selling and buying and feeding them; but it hath reached me that the rarest thing which befell them was on this wise."

THE THIEF'S TALE.

THE woman who acted decoy for them and trapped their game, and used to inveigle damsels from marriage-banquets, once caught them a woman from a bride-feast, under pretence that she had a wedding in her own house, and fixed for her a day when she should come to her. As soon as the appointed time arrived, the woman presented herself and the other carried her into the house by a door, declaring that it was a private wicket. When she entered the saloon, she saw men and braves[1] and knew that she had fallen into a snare; so she looked at them and said, "Harkye, my fine fellows[2]! I am a woman and in my slaughter there is no glory, nor have ye against me any feud of blood-wite wherefor ye should pursue me; and that which is upon me of raiment and ornaments ye are free to take as lawful loot." Quoth they, "We fear thy denunciation"; but quoth she, "I will abide with you, neither coming in nor going out." So they said, "We grant thee thy life." Then the Captain looked on her and she pleased him; so he took her for himself, and she abode with him a whole year doing her very best in their service, till they became familiar with her and felt assured of her faith. One night of the nights she plied them with drink and they drank till they became drunken; whereupon she arose and took her clothes and five hundred dinars from the Captain; after which she

1 Arab. "Abtál"=champions, athletes, etc., plur. of Batal, a brave: so Batalat=a virago. As the root Batala=it was vain, the form "Battál" may mean either a hero or a bad lot; see vol. vi., night dcccl.xxxv.; and vol. vii., Terminal Essay, § 1, A.

2 Arab. "Fityán"; plur. of Fatà; see vol. i. night vii.

fetched a razor and shaved off all their beards. Then she took soot from the cooking-pots and blackening their faces[1] opened the doors and fared forth; and when the thieves recovered from their drink, they abode confounded and knew that the woman had practised upon them. All present marvelled at this his story, and the ninth constable came forward and said, "I will tell you a right pleasant tale I heard at a wedding."

THE NINTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

A CERTAIN singing-girl was fair of favour and bruited of repute, and it happened one day that she fared forth to a garden a-pleasuring. As she sat in the summer-house, behold, a man lopped of the hand stopped to beg of her, and suddenly entered in at the door. Then he touched her with his stump, saying, "An alms, for the love of Allah[2]!" but she answered, "Allah open!" and insulted him. Many days after this, there came to her a messenger and gave her the hire of her going forth.[3] So she took with her a hand-maid and an accompanyist[4]; and when she came to the place appointed, the messenger brought her into a long passage, at the end whereof was a saloon. So (quoth she) we entered therein and found nobody, but we saw the room made ready for an entertainment with candles, dried fruits and wine, and in another place we saw food, and in a third beds. Thereupon we sat down and I looked at him who had opened the door to us, and behold he was lopped of the hand. I misliked this, and when I sat a little longer, there entered a man, who filled the candelabra in the saloon and lit the waxen candles; and behold, he also was handlopped. Then flocked the folk and there entered none except he were lopped of the hand, and indeed the house was full of these companions.[5] When the session was complete, the host came in and the company rose to him and seated him in the place of honour. Now he was none other than the man who

1 This was in popular parlance "adding insult to injury"; the blackening their faces was a promise of Hell-fire.

2 Arab. "Shayyan li 'lláh!" lit. = (Give me some) Thing for (the love of) Allah. The answer in Egypt. is "Allah ya'tík" = Allah will give it thee (not I), or, "Yaftah 'Allah," = Allah open (to thee the door of subsistence): in Marocco "Sir fi hálik" (pron Sirf hák) = Go about thy business. In all cities there is a formula which suffices the asker; but the Ghashím (Johnny Raw) who ignores it, is pestered only the more by his protestations that "he left his purse at home," etc.

3 *i.e.*, engaged her for a revel and paid her in advance.

4 Arab. "Rasílah" = a (she) partner, to accompany her on the lute.

5 Suggesting that they are all thieves who had undergone legal mutilation.

had fetched me, and he was clad in sumptuous clothes, but his hands were in his sleeves, so that I knew not how it was with them. They brought him food and he ate, he and the company; after which they washed hands and the host began casting at me furtive glances. Then they drank till they were drunken, and when they had taken leave of their wits, the host turned to me and said, "Thou dealtest not in friendly fashion with him who sought an alms of thee, and thou saidst to him:—How loathsome art thou!" I considered him and behold, he was the lophand who had accosted me in my pleasance.[1] So I asked, "O my lord, what is this thou sayest?" and he answered, "Wait; thou shalt remember it." So saying, he shook his head and stroked his beard, whilst I sat down for fear. Then he put out his hand to my mantilla and walking-boots and laying them by his side, cried to me, "Sing, O accursed!" Accordingly, I sang till I was tired out, what while they occupied themselves with their case and drank themselves drunk, and the heat of their drink redoubled. Presently, the doorkeeper came to me and said, "O my lady, fear not; but when thou hast a mind to go, let me know." Quoth I, "Thinkest thou to delude me?" and quoth he, "Nay, by Allah! But I have ruth on thee for that our Captain and chief purposeth thee no good, and methinketh he will kill thee this night." Said I to him, "An thou be minded to do me a favour, now is its time"; and said he, "When our Chief riseth to his need and goeth to the Chapel of Ease, I will precede him with the light and leave the door open; and do thou wend whithersoever thou willest." Then I sang and the Captain cried, "'Tis good." Replied I, "Nay, but thou 'rt loathsome." He looked at me and rejoined, "By Allah, thou shalt never more scent the odour of the world!" But his comrades said to him, "Do it not," and gentled him, till he added, "An it must be so, and there be no help for it, she shall tarry here a whole year and not fare forth." My answer was, "I am content to submit to whatso pleaseth thee: if I have failed in respect to thee, thou art of the clement." He shook his head and drank, then arose and went out to do his need, whilst his comrades were occupied with what they were about of merry-making and drunkenness and sport. So I winked to my friends, and we all slipped out into the corridor. We found the door open and fled forth, unveiled[2] and unknowing whither we went; nor did we halt till we had fared afar from the house and

1 Arab. "Nuzhat-i": see vol. i. night xlv.

2 Arab. "Muhattakát"; usually "with torn veils" (fem. plur.), here "without veils," metaphor, meaning in disgrace, in dishonour.

happened on a Cook cooking, of whom I asked, "Hast thou a mind to quicken the dead?" He said, "Come up"; so we went up into the shop, and he whispered, "Lie down." Accordingly, we lay down and he covered us with the Halfah grass,[1] wherewith he was used to kindle the fire under the food. Hardly had we settled ourselves in the place when we heard a noise of kicking at the door and people running right and left and questioning the Cook and asking, "Hath anyone passed by thee?" Answered he, "None hath passed by me." But they ceased not to go round about the shop till the day broke, when they turned back, disappointed. Then the Cook removed the reeds and said to us, "Rise, for ye are delivered from death." So we arose, and we were uncovered, sans veil or mantilla; but the Cook carried us up into his house and we sent to our homes and fetched us veils; and we repented to Allah Almighty and renounced singing, for indeed this was a mighty narrow escape after stress.[2] Those present marvelled at this, and the tenth constable came forward and said, "As for me, there befell me that which was yet rarer than all ye have yet heard." Quoth Al-Malik al-Zahir, "What was that?" And quoth he, "Deign give ear to me."

THE TENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

A ROBBERY of stuffs had been committed in the city and as it was a great matter I was cited,[3] I and my fellows: they[4] pressed hard upon us: but we obtained of them some days' grace and dispersed in search of the stolen goods. As for me, I sallied forth with five men and went round about the city that day; and on the morrow we fared forth into the suburbs. When we found ourselves a parasang or two parasangs away from the city, we waxed athirst; and presently we came to a garden. There I went in alone and going up to the water-wheel,[5] entered it and drank and made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed. Presently, up came the keeper of the garden and said to me, "Woe to thee! Who brought thee to this

1 For this reedy Poa, see vol. i. night xxxv.

2 I have repeatedly noticed that singing and all music are, in religious parlance, "Makrúh," blameable though not actually damnable; and that the first step after "getting religion" is to forswear them.

3 *i.e.*, to find the thief or make good the loss.

4 *i.e.*, the claimants.

5 Arab "Sákiyah": see vol. i. night xiii.

water-wheel?" and he smote me and squeezed my ribs[1] till I was like to die. Then he bound me with one of his bulls and made me work the water-wheel, flogging me as I walked round with a cattle-whip[2] he had with him, till my heart was a-fire; after which he loosed me and I went out, knowing not the way. Now when I came forth, I fainted: so I sat down till my trouble subsided; then I made for my comrades and said to them, "I have found money and malefactor, and I affrighted him not neither troubled him, lest he should flee; but now, come, let us go to him, so we may contrive to lay hold upon him." Then I took them and we repaired to the keeper of the garden, who had tortured me with tunding, with the intent to make him taste the like of that which he had done with me and lie against him and cause him eat many a stick. So we rushed to the water-wheel and seized the keeper. Now there was with him a youth and, as we were pinioning the gardener, he said, "By Allah, I was not with him and indeed 'tis six months since I entered this city, nor did I set eyes on the stuffs until they were brought hither." Quoth we, "Show us the stuffs"; upon which he carried us to a place wherein was a pit, beside the water-wheel, and digging there, brought out the stolen goods with not a thread or a stitch of them missing. So we took them and carried the keeper to the Prefecture of Police, where we stripped him and beat him with palm-rods till he confessed to thefts manifold. Now I did this by way of mockery against my comrades, and it succeeded. The company marvelled at this story with the utmost marvelling, and the eleventh constable rose and said, "I know a story yet stranger than this: but it happened not to myself."

THE ELEVENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

THERE was once in times of yore a Chief Officer of Police, and there passed by him one day of the days a Jew, hending in hand a basket wherein were five thousand dinars; whereupon quoth

1 The lower orders of Egypt and Syria are addicted to this bear-like attack; in like manner the negroes imitate fighting-rams by butting with their stony heads. Let me remark that when Herodotus (iii. 12), after Psammenitus' battle of Pelusium in B.C. 524, made the remark that the Egyptian crania were hardened by shaving and insolation, and the Persians were softened by wearing head-cloths, he tripped in his anthropology. The Iranian skull is naturally thin compared with that of the negroid Egyptian and the negro.

2 Arab. "Farkalah," φραγέλλιον from flagellum; cattle-whip with leathern thongs. Lane, M.E.; Fleischer Glos. 83-84; Dozy, *s.v.*

that officer to one of his slaves, "Art able to take that money from yonder Jew's basket?" "Yes," quoth he, nor did he tarry beyond the next day ere he came to his lord, bringing the basket. So (said the officer) I bade him, "Go, bury it in such a place"; whereupon he went and buried it, and returned and told me. Hardly had he reported this when there arose a clamour like that of Doomsday and up came the Jew, with one of the king's officers, declaring that the gold pieces belonged to the Sultan, and that he looked to none but us for it. We demanded of him three days' delay, according to custom, and I said to him who had taken the money, "Go and set in the Jew's house somewhat that shall occupy him with himself." Accordingly he went and played a mighty fine trick, which was, he laid in a basket a dead woman's hand, painted with henna, and having a gold seal-ring on one of the fingers, and buried that basket under a slab in the Jew's home. Then we came and searched and found the basket, whereupon without a moment of delay we clapped the Jew in irons for the murder of a woman. As soon as it was the appointed time, there entered to us the man of the Sultan's guards, who had accompanied the Jew, when he came to complain of the loss of the money,[1] and said, "The Sultan sayeth to you, Nail up[2] the Jew and bring the money, for that there is no way by which five thousand gold pieces can be lost." Wherefore we knew that our device did not suffice. So I went forth, and finding a young man, a Hauráni,[3] passing along the road, laid hands on him forthright and stripped him, and whipped him with palm-rods. Then I threw him in jail, ironed, and carrying him to the Prefecture, beat him again, saying to them, "This be the robber who stole the coin." And we strove to make him confess; but he would not. Accordingly, we beat him a third and a fourth time, till we were aweary and exhausted, and he became unable to return a

1 This clause is supplied to make sense.

2 *i.e.*, to crucify him by nailing him to an upright board.

3 *i.e.*, a native of the Hauran, Job's country east of Damascus, now a luxuriant waste, haunted only by the plundering Badawin and the Druzes of the hills, who are no better, but its stretches of ruins and league-long swathes of stone over which the vine was trained, show what it has been and what it will be again when the incubus of Turkish mis-rule shall be removed from it. Herr Schuhmacher has lately noted in the Hauran sundry Arab traditions of Job; the village Nawá, where he lived; the Hammam 'Ayyúb, where he washed his leprous skin; the Dayr Ayyúb, a monastery said to date from the third century; and the Makan Ayyub at Al-Markáz, where the patriarch and his wife are buried. The "Rock of Job," covered by a mosque, is a basaltic monolith 7 feet high by 4, and is probably connected with the solar worship of the old Phœnicians.

reply; but, when we had made an end of beating and tormenting him, he said, "I will fetch the money this very moment." Presently we went with him till he came to the place where my slave had buried the gold, and he dug there and brought it out; whereat I marvelled with the utmost marvel, and we carried it to the Prefect's house. When the Wali saw the money and made sure of it with his own eyes, he rejoiced with joy exceeding and bestowed on me a robe of honour. Then he restored the coin straightway to the Sultan, and we left the youth in durance vile; whilst I said to my slave who had taken the money, "Say me, did yonder young man see thee, what time thou buriedst the money?" and he replied, "No, by Allah the Great!" So I went in to the young man, the prisoner, and plied him with wine[1] till he recovered, when I said to him, "Tell me how thou stolest the money?" Answered he, "By Allah, I stole it not, nor did I ever set eyes on it till I brought it forth of the earth!" Quoth I, "How so?" and quoth he, "Know that the cause of my falling into your hands was my parent's imprecation against me; because I entreated her evilly yesternight and beat her, and she said to me, By Allah, O my son, the Lord shall assuredly gar the oppressor prevail over thee! Now she is a pious woman. So I went out forthright, and thou sawest me on my way and didst that which thou didst; and when beating was prolonged on me, my senses failed me and I heard a voice saying to me, Fetch it. So I said to you what I said, and the speaker[2] guided me till I came to the place, and there befell what befell of the bringing out of the money." I admired this with the utmost admiration, and knew that he was of the sons of the pious. So I bestirred myself for his release and cured him, and besought him of acquittance and absolution of responsibility. All those who were present marvelled at this story with the utmost marvel, and the twelfth constable came forward and said, "I will tell you a pleasant trait that I heard from a certain person, concerning an adventure which befell him with one of the thieves."

1 This habit, "torquere mero," was a favourite with the mediæval Arabs. Its effect varies greatly with men's characters, making some open-hearted and communicative, and others more cunning and secretive than in the normal state. So far it is an excellent detection of disposition, and many a man who passes off well when sober has shown himself in liquor a rank snob. Among the lower orders it provokes what the Persians call Bad-masti (le vin méchant) see Pilgrimage, iii. 385.

2 This mystery is not unfamiliar to the modern "spiritualist"; and all Eastern tongues have a special term for the mysterious Voice. See vol. i night xv.

THE TWELFTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

(QUOTH he) I was passing one day in the market, when I found that a robber had broken into the shop of a shroff, a changer o monies, and thence taken a casket, wherewith he had made off to the burial-ground. Accordingly I followed him thither and came up to him, as he opened the casket and fell a-looking into it; whereupon I accosted him, saying, "Peace be on you[1]!" And he was startled at me; so I left him and went away from him. Some months after this, I met him again under arrest, in the midst of the guards and "men of violence,[2]" and he said to them, "Seize this man." So they laid hands on me and carried me to the Chief of Police, who said, "What hast thou to do with this wight?" The robber turned to me and looking a long while in my face, asked, "Who took this man?" and the officer answered, "Thou badest us take him; so we took him." And he cried, "I ask refuge of Allah! I know not this man, nor knoweth he me; and I said not that to you but of a person other than this." So they released me, and a while after the thief met me in the street and saluted me with the salam, saying, "O my lord, fright for fright! Hadst thou taken aught from me, thou hadst a part in the calamity.[3]" I replied to him, "Allah be the judge between me and thee![4]" And this is what I have to recount. Then came forward the thirteenth constable and said, "I will tell you a tale which a man of my friends told me."

THE THIRTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

(QUOTH he) I went out one night of the nights to the house of a friend, and when it was the middle of the night I sallied forth alone to hie me home. When I came into the road, I espied a sort of thieves and they espied me, whereupon my spittle dried

1 Arab. "Alaykum"; addressed to a single person. This is generally explained by the "Salam" reaching the ears of Invisible Controuls, and even the Apostle. We find the words cruelly distorted in the Pentamerone of Giambattista Basile (partly translated by John E. Taylor, London; Bogue, 1848), "The Prince, coming up to the old woman heard an hundred Licasalemme," p. 383.

2 Arab. "Al-Zalamah"; the policeman; see vol. v. night dcvii.

3 *i.e.*, in my punishment.

4 *i.e.*, on Doomsday thou shalt get thy deserts.

up; but I feigned myself drunken and staggered from side to side, crying out and saying, "I am drunken." And I went up to the walls right and left and made as if I saw not the thieves, who followed me afoot till I reached my home and knocked at the door, when they went away. Some few days after this, as I stood at the door of my house, behold, there came up to me a young man with a chain about his neck and with him a trooper, and he said to me, "O my lord, an alms for the love of Allah!" I replied, "Allah open!" and he looked at me a long while and cried, "That which thou shouldst give me would not come to the worth of thy turband or thy waistcloth or what not else of thy habit, to say nothing of the gold and the silver which were about thy person." I asked, "And how so?" and he answered, "On such a night, when thou fellest into peril, and the thieves would have stripped thee, I was with them and said to them, Yonder man is my lord and my master who reared me. So was I and only I the cause of thy deliverance, and thus I saved thee from them." When I heard this, I said to him, "Stop"; and entering my house, brought him that which Allah Almighty made easy to me.[1] So he went his way; and this is all I have to say. Then came forward the fourteenth constable and said, "Know that the tale I have to tell is rarer and pleasanter than this; and 'tis as follows."

THE FOURTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

I HAD a draper's shop before I entered this corporation,[2] and there used to come to me a person whom I knew not, save by his face, and I would give him whatso he sought and have patience with him, till he could pay me. One night, I foregathered with certain of my friends and we sat down to liquor: so we drank and were merry and played at Táb[3]; and we made one of us Wazir and another Sultan and a third Torchbearer or Headsman.[4]

1 *i.e.*, what I could well afford.

2 Arab. Hirfah = a trade, a guild, a corporation; here the officers of police.

3 Gen. "tip-cat" (vol. ii. night cxvii.). Here it would mean a rude form of tables or backgammon, in which the players who throw certain numbers are dubbed Sultan and Wazir, and demean themselves accordingly. A favourite bit of fun with Cairene boys of a past generation was to "make a Pasha"; and for this proceeding, see Pilgrimage, vol. i. 119.

4 In Marocco there is great difficulty about finding an executioner, who becomes obnoxious to the Thár, *vendetta* or blood-revenge. For salting the criminal's head, however, the soldiers seize upon the nearest Jew and compel him to clean out the brain and to prepare it for what is often a long journey. Hence, according to some, the local name of the Ghetto, Al-Mallàh, = the salting-ground.

Presently, there came in upon us a spunger, without bidding, and we went on playing, whilst he played with us. Then quoth the Sultan to the Wazir, "Bring the Parasite who cometh in to the folk, without leave or licence, that we may enquire into his case; after which will I cut off his head"; so the headsman arose and dragged the spunger before the Sultan who bade cut off his head. Now there was with them a sword, that would not cut clotted curd[1]; so the headsman smote him therewith and his head flew from his body. When we saw this, the wine fled from our brains and we became in the foulest of plights. Then my friends lifted up the corpse and went out with it, that they might hide it, whilst I took the head and made for the river. Now I was drunken and my clothes were drenched with the blood; and as I passed along the road I met a robber. When he saw me, he knew me and cried to me, "Such-an-one!" "Well?" said I, and he rejoined, "What is that thou hast with thee?" So I acquainted him with the case, and he took the head from me. Then we fared on till we came to the river, where he washed the head and, considering it straitly, exclaimed, "By Allah, verily this be my brother, the son of my sire, and he used to spunge upon the folk"; after which he threw that head into the river. As for me, I was like a dead man for dread; but he said to me, "Fear not, neither do thou grieve, for I acquit thee of my brother's blood." Presently, he took my clothes and washed them and dried them and put them on me; after which he said to me, "Get thee gone to thy house." So I returned to my house and he accompanied me, till I came thither, when he said to me, "Allah never desolate thee! I am thy friend Such-an-one, who used to take of thee goods on credit, and I owe thee a kindness; but henceforward thou wilt never see me more." Then he went his ways. The company marvelled at the manliness of this man and his clemency[2] and courtesy, and the Sultan said, "Tell us another of thy stories, O Shahrazad.'" She replied "'Tis well! They set forth[3]

1 Mr. Payne suspects that "laban," milk, esp. artificially soured (see vol. v. night dciii.), is a clerical error for "jubn" = cheese. This may be; but I follow the text as the exaggeration is greater.

2 *i.e.*, in relinquishing his blood-wite for his brother.

3 The Story-teller, probably to relieve the monotony of the Constables' histories, here returns to the original cadre. We must not forget that in the Bresl Edit the Nights are running on, and that the charming queen is relating the adventure of Al-Malik al-Zahir.

4 Arab. "Za'amú" = they opine, they declare; a favourite term with the Bresl. Edit.

A MERRY JEST OF A CLEVER THIEF."

A THIEF of the thieves of the Arabs went one night to a certain man's house, to steal from a heap of wheat there, and the people of the house surprised him. Now on the heap was a great copper tasse, and the thief buried himself in the corn and covered his head with the tasse, so that the folk found him not and went their ways; but, as they were going, behold, there came a mighty great breaking of wind[1] forth of the corn. So they went up to the tasse and raising it, discovered the thief and laid hands on him. Quoth he, "I have saved you the trouble of seeking me: for I purposed, in breaking wind, to direct you to my hiding-place; wherefore do you be easy with me and have ruth on me, so may Allah have ruth on you!" Accordingly they let him go and harmed him not. "And for another story of the same kind" (she continued), "hearken to

THE TALE OF THE OLD SHARPER."

THERE was once an old man renowned for clever roguery, and he went, he and his mates, to one of the markets and stole thence a quantity of stuffs: then they separated and returned each to his quarter. Awhile after this, the old man assembled a company of his fellows and, as they sat at drink, one of them pulled out a costly piece of cloth and said, "Is there any one of you will dare sell this in its own market whence it was stolen, that we may confess his superior subtlety?" Quoth the old man, "I will"; and they said, "Go, and Allah Almighty open to thee the door!" So early on the morrow, he took the stuff and carrying it to the market whence it had been stolen, sat down at the very shop out of which it had been purloined, and gave it to the broker, who hent it in hand and cried it for sale. Its owner knew it and bidding for it, bought it and sent after the Chief of Police, who seized the Sharper and, seeing him an old man of grave presence and handsomely clad, said to him, "Whence hadst thou

1 Arab. "Zirtah," the coarsest of terms for what the French nuns prettily termed *un sonnet*. I find *ung sonnet* also in Nov. 11. of the Cent nouvelles Nouvelles. Captain Lockett (p. 32) quotes Strepsiades in The Clouds, *βροντῇ κομιδῇ παππάξ*, "because he cannot express the bathos of the original (in the Tale of Ja'afar and the old Badawi) without descending to the oracular language of Giacoma Rodogina, the engastrymythian prophetess." But Sterne was by no means so squeamish.

this piece of stuff?" Quoth he, "I had it from this market and from yonder shop where I was sitting." Quoth the Wali, "Did its owner sell it to thee?" and quoth the robber, "Not so; I stole it, this and other than it." Then said the Chief, "How camest thou to bring it for sale to the place whence thou stolest it?" "I will not tell my tale save to the Sultan, for that I have a profitable counsel wherewith I would lief bespeak him." "Name it!" "Art thou the Sultan?" "No!" "I'll not tell it save to himself." Accordingly the Wali carried him up to the Sultan and he said, "I have a counsel for thee, O my lord." Asked the Sultan, "What is thy counsel?" And the thief said, "I repent and will deliver into thy hand all who are evildoers; and whomsoever I bring not, I will stand in his stead." Cried the Sultan, "Give him a robe of honour and accept his profession of penitence." So he went down from the presence and, returning to his comrades, related to them that which had passed, when they confessed his subtlety and gave him that which they had promised him. Then he took the rest of the booty and went up therewith to the Sultan, who, seeing him, recognised him, and he was magnified in the royal eyes, and the king commanded that naught should be taken from him. After this, when he went down, the Sultan's attention was diverted from him, little by little, till the case was forgotten, and so he saved the booty for himself. Those present marvelled at this, and the fifteenth constable came forward and said, "Know that among those who make a trade of trickery are those whom Allah Almighty taketh on their own testimony against themselves." It was asked him, "How so?" and he began to relate

THE FIFTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.[1]

It is told of a thieving person, one of the braves, that he used to rob and cut the way by himself upon caravans, and whenever the Chief of Police and the Governors sought him, he would flee from them and fortify himself in the mountains. Now it came to pass

1 This tale is a replica of the Cranes of Ibycus. This was a Rhegium man who when returning to Corinth, his home, was set upon by robbers and slain. He cast his dying eyes heavenwards and, seeing a flight of cranes, called upon them to avenge him, and this they did by flying over the theatre of Corinth on a day when the murderers were present, and one cried out, "Behold the avengers of Ibycus!" Whereupon they were taken and put to death. So says Paulus Hieronymus, and the affecting old tale has newly been sung in charming verse by Mr. Justin H. McCarthy ("Serapion." London: Chatto and Windus.)

that a certain man journeyed along the road wherein was that robber, and this man was single-handed and knew not the sore perils besetting his way. So the highwayman came out upon him and said to him, "Bring out that which is with thee, for I mean to kill thee and no mistake." Quoth the traveller, "Kill me not, but annex these saddle-bags and divide that which is in them and take to thee the fourth part." And the thief answered, "I will not take aught but the whole.[1]" Rejoined the traveller, "Take half, and let me go"; but the robber replied, "I will have naught but the whole, and eke I will kill thee." So the wayfarer said, "Take it." Accordingly the highwayman took the saddle-bags and offered to slay the traveller, who said, "What is this? Thou hast against me no blood-feud that should make my slaughter incumbent." Quoth the other, "Needs must I kill thee"; whereupon the traveller dismounted from his horse and grovelled before him, beseeching the thief and bespeaking him fair. The man hearkened not to his prayers, but cast him to the ground; whereupon the traveller raised his eyes and seeing a francolin flying over him, said, in his agony, "O Francolin,[2] bear testimony that this man slayeth me unjustly and wickedly; for indeed I have given him all that was with me and entreated him to let me go, for my children's sake; yet would he not consent. But be thou witness against him, for Allah is not unmindful of deeds which the oppressors do." The highwayman paid no heed to what he heard, but smote him and cut off his head. After this, the rulers compounded with the highwayman for his submission, and when he came before them, they enriched him and he became in such favour with the lieutenant of the Sultan that he used to eat and drink with him, and there befell between them familiar converse which lasted a long while till in fine there chanced a curious chance. The lieutenant of the Sultan one day of the days made a banquet, and therein was a roasted francolin, which when the robber saw he laughed a loud laugh. The lieutenant was angered against him and said to him, "What is the meaning of thy laughter? Seest thou any fault or dost thou mock at us, of thy lack of good manners?" Answered the highwayman, "Not so, by Allah, O my lord; but I saw yonder francolin, which brought to my mind an extraordinary thing; and 'twas on this wise. In the days of my youth I used to cut the way, and one day I waylaid a man, who had with him a pair of saddle-bags and money therein. So I said to him, "Leave these

1 This scene is perfectly true to Badawi life; see my Pilgrimage, iii. 68.
2 Arab. "Durráj": so it is rendered in the French translation of Al-Mas'údi, vii. 347.

saddle-bags, for I mean to slay thee." Quoth he, "Take the fourth part of that which is in them and leave me the rest"; and quoth I, "Needs must I take the whole and kill thee without mistake." Then said he, "Take the saddle-bags and let me wend my way"; but I answered, "There in no help but that I slay thee." As we were in this contention, behold, he saw a francolin and turning to it, said, "Bear testimony against him, O Francolin, that he slayeth me unjustly, and letteth me not go to my children, for all he hath taken my money." However, I had no pity on him neither hearkened to that which he said, but smote him and slew him and concerned not myself with the evidence of the francolin." His story troubled the lieutenant of the Sultan and he was enraged against him with a sore rage; so he drew his sword and smiting him, cut off his head while he sat at table; whereupon a voice recited these couplets:—

An wouldst not be injurèd, injure not; * But do good and from Allah win goodly lot;
For what happeth by Allah is doomed to be * Yet thine acts are the root I would have thee wot.[1]

1 A fair friend found the idea of Destiny in The Nights become almost a night-mare. Yet here we suddenly alight upon the true Johnsonian idea that conduct makes fate. Both extremes are as usual false. When one man fights a dozen battles unwounded and another falls at the first shot, we cannot but acknowledge the presence of that mysterious "luck" whose laws, now utterly unknown to us, may become familiar with the ages. I may note that the idea of an appointed hour beyond which life may not be prolonged, is as old as Homer (Il. vi. 487).

The reader has been told (vol. v. night dcxcv) that "Kazá" is Fate in a general sense, the universal and eternal Decree of Allah, while "Kadar" is its special and particular application to man's lot, that is Allah's will in bringing forth events at a certain time and place. But the former is popularly held to be of two categories, one Kazá al-Muham which admits of modification and Kazá al-Muhkam, absolute and unchangeable, the doctrine of irresistible predestination preached with so much energy by St. Paul (Romans ix. 15-24); and all the world over men act upon the former while theoretically holding to the latter. Hence "Chinese Gordon," whose loss to England is greater than even his friends suppose, wrote, "It is a delightful thing to be a fatalist," meaning that the Divine direction and pre-ordination of all things saved him so much trouble of forethought and afterthought. In this tenet he was not only a Calvinist but also a Moslem, whose contradictory ideas of Fate and Freewill (with responsibility) are not only beyond Reason but are contrary to Reason; and although we may admit the *argumentum ad verecundiam*, suggesting that there are things above (or below) human intelligence, we are not bound so to do in the case of things which are opposed to the common sense of mankind. Practically, however, the Moslem attitude is to be loud in confessing belief of "Fate and Fortune" before an event happens, and after it wisely to console himself with the conviction that in no way could he have escaped the occurrence. And the belief that this destiny was in the hands of Allah gives him a certain dignity especially in the presence of disease and death, which is wanting in his rival religionist the Christian. At the same time the fanciful picture of the Turk sitting stolidly

Now this voice was the francolin which bore witness against him. The company present marvelled at this tale and all cried, "Woe to the oppressor!" Then came forward the sixteenth constable and said, "And I for another will tell you a marvellous story which is on this wise."

THE SIXTEENTH CONSTABLE'S HISTORY.

I WENT forth one day of the days, intending to travel, and suddenly fell upon a man whose wont it was to cut the way. When he came up with me he offered to slay me, and I said to him, "I have nought with me whereby thou mayst profit." Quoth he, "My profit shall be the taking of thy life." I asked, "What is the cause of this? Hath there been enmity between us aforetime?" and he answered, "Nay; but needs must I slay thee." Thereupon I ran away from him to the river side; but he caught me up and casting me to the ground, sat down on my breast. So I sought help of the Shaykh of the Pilgrims,[1] and cried to him,

under a shower of bullets, because Fate will not find him out unless it be so written, is a freak of fancy rarely found in real life

There are four great points of dispute amongst the schoolmen in Al-Islam; (1) the Unity and Attributes of Allah; (2) His promises and threats; (3) historical as the office of Imám; and (4) Predestination and the justice thereof. On the latter subject opinions range over the whole cycle of possibilities. For instance, the Mu'tazilites, whom the learned Weil makes the Protestants and Rationalists of Al-Islam, contend that the word of Allah was created *in subjecto, ergò*, an accident and liable to perish, and one of their school, the Kádiriyah (=having power) denies the existence of Fate and contends that Allah did not create evil but left man an absolutely free agent. On the other hand, the Jabariyah (or Mujabbar=the compelled) is an absolute Fatalist who believes in the omnipotence of Destiny and deems that all wisdom consists in conforming with its decrees. Al-Mas'udi (chapt. cxxvii.) illustrates this by the saying of a Moslem philosopher that chess was the invention of a Mu'tazil, while Nard (backgammon with dice) was that of a Mujabbar proving that play can do nothing against destiny. Between the two are the Ashariyah; trimmers whose stand-point is hard to define; they would say, "Allah creates the power by which man acts, but man wills the action," and care not to answer the query, "Who created the will?" (See Pocock, Sale and the Dabistan, ii. 352.) Thus Sa'adi says in the Gulistan (iii. 2), "The wise have pronounced that though daily bread be allotted, yet it is so conditionally upon using means to acquire it, and although calamity be predestined, yet it is right to secure one's self against the portals by which it may have access." Lastly, not a few doctors of Law and Religion hold that Kaza al-Muhkam, however absolute, regards only man's after or final state; and upon this subject they are of course as wise as other people, and—no wiser. Lane has treated the Moslem faith in Destiny very ably and fully (Arabian Nights, vol. i. pp. 58-62), and he being a man of moderate and orthodox views gives valuable testimony.

1 Arab. "Shaykh al-Hujjáj." Some Santon like Hasan al-Marábit, then invoked by the Meccan pilgrims: see Pilgrimage, i. 321. It can hardly refer to the famous Hajjáj bin Yúsuf al-Sakafi (vol. iii. night ccxxxvii.).

"Protect me from this oppressor!" And indeed he had drawn a knife to cut my throat when, lo and behold! there came a mighty great crocodile forth of the river, and snatching him up from off my breast plunged into the water, with him still hending knife in hand, even within the jaws of the beast: whilst I abode extolling Almighty Allah, and rendering thanks for my preservation to Him who had delivered me from the hand of that wrong-doer.[1]

TALE OF HARUN AL-RASHID AND ABDULLAH BIN NAFI'.[2]

KNOW thou, O King of the Age, that there was in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, a Caliph Harun al-Rashid hight, and he had cup-companions and tale-tellers to entertain him by night. Among his equerries was a man named Abdullah bin Náfi', who stood high in favour with him and dear to him, so that he did not forget him a single hour. Now it came to pass, by the decree of Destiny, that it became manifest to Abdullah how he was grown of small account with the Caliph, who paid no heed unto him nor, if he absented himself, did he ask after him, as had been his habit. This was grievous to Abdullah, and he said within himself, "Verily, the souls of the Commander of the Faithful and of his Wazir are changed towards me, and nevermore shall I see in him that cordiality and affection wherewith he was wont to treat me." And this was chagrin-full to him and concern grew upon him, so that he recited these couplets:—

Whoso's contemned in his home and land * Should, to better his case in self-exile hie:
So fly the house where contempt awaits, * Nor on fires of grief for the parting fry;

1 Here the Stories of the Sixteen Constables abruptly end, after the fashion of the Bresl. Edit. They are summarily dismissed even without the normal "Bakhshish."

2 Bresl. Edit. vol. xi. pp. 400-473 and vol. xii. pp. 4-50, nights dcccexli-dcccclvii. For Kashghar, see vol. i., night xxiv

Crude Ambergris[1] is but offal where * 'Tis born; but abroad on our necks shall stye;
And Kohl at home is a kind of stone, * Cast on face of earth and on roads to lie;
But when borne abroad it wins highest worth * And thrones between eyelid and ball of eye.

(Quoth the sayer,) Then he could brook this matter no longer; so he went forth from the dominions of the Prince of True Believers, under pretence of visiting certain of his kith and kin, and took with him nor servant nor comrade, neither acquainted any with his intent, but betook himself to the road and fared deep into the wold and the sandwastes, unknowing whither he went. After awhile, he unexpectedly fell in with travellers who were making the land of Hind and journeyed with them. When he came thither, he lighted down in a city of that country and housed him in one of the lodging-houses; and there he abode a while of days, relishing not food neither solacing himself with sleep; nor was this for lack of dirhams or dinars, but for that his mind was occupied with musing upon the shifts of Destiny, and bemoaning himself for that the revolving sphere had turned against him in enmity, and the days had decreed unto him the disfavour of our lord the Imam.[2] After such fashion he abode a space of days, and presently he homed him in the land, and took to himself friends and got him many familiars, with whom he addressed himself to diversion and good cheer. He used also to go a-pleasuring with his companions and their hearts were solaced by his company, and he entertained them every evening with stories and displays of his manifold accomplishments,[3] and diverted them with delectable verses and told them abundance of stories and histories. Presently, the report of him reached King Jamhúr, lord of Kashgar of Hind, who sent in quest of him, and great was his desire to see him. So Abdullah repaired to his court, and going into him kissed ground before him; and Jamhur welcomed him and treated him with kindness, and bade lodge

1 Mr. Payne proposes to translate "'Anbar" by amber, the semi-fossilised resin much used in modern days, especially in Turkey and Somaliland, for bead necklaces. But, as he says, the second line distinctly alludes to the perfume which is sewn in leather and hung about the neck, after the fashion of our ancient pomanders *(pomme d'ambre)*.

2 *i.e.*, the Caliph

3 Arab. "Adab": see vol. i. night xiii. etc. In Moslem dialects, which borrow more or less from Arabic, "Bi-adabi"=being without Adab, means rudeness, disrespect, "impertinence" (in its modern sense).

him in the guest-house, where he abode three days, at the end of which the king sent to him a chamberlain of his chamberlains, and bade bring him to the presence. When he came before him, he greeted him, and the truchman accosted him, saying, "Verily, King Jamhur hath heard of thy report, that thou art a pleasant cup-companion and an eloquent teller of night-tales, and he would have thee company with him o' nights and entertain him with that which thou knowest of histories and pleasant stories and verses." And he made answer, "To hear is to obey!" (Quoth Abdullah bin Nafi',) So I became his boon-companion and entertained him by night with tales and talk; and this pleased him with the utmost pleasure, and he took me into favour and bestowed on me robes of honour and set apart for me a lodging; indeed he was bountiful exceedingly to me, and could not brook to be parted from me a single hour. So I sojourned with him a while of time, and every night I caroused and conversed with him till the most part of the dark hours was past; and when drowsiness overcame him, he would rise and betake himself to his sleeping-place, saying to me, "Forsake not my service and forego not my presence." And I made answer with, "Hearing and obeying." Now the king had a son, a nice child, called the Emir Mohammed, who was winsome of youth and sweet of speech: he had read books and had perused histories, and he loved above all things in the world the telling and hearing of verses and tales and anecdotes. He was dear to his father, King Jamhur, for that he owned no other son than he on life, and indeed he had reared him in the lap of love, and he was gifted with exceeding beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and perfect grace: he had also learnt to play upon the lute and upon all manner instruments, and he was used to converse and company with friends and brethren. Now it was his wont, when the king arose seeking his sleeping-chamber, to sit in his place and require me to entertain him with tales and verses and pleasant anecdotes; and on this wise I abode with them both a great while in all joyance and delight, and the Prince still loved me with mighty great love, and treated me with the utmost tenderness. It fortuned one day that the king's son came to me, after his sire had withdrawn, and cried, "O Ibn Nafi'!" "At thy service, O my lord"; "I would have thee tell me a wondrous story and a marvellous matter, which thou hast never related either to me or to my father Jamhur." "O my lord, what story is this that thou desirest of me, and of what kind shall it be of the kinds?" "It mattereth

little, so it be a goodly story, whether it befell of olden tide or in these times." "O my lord, I know by rote many stories of various kinds; so which of the kinds preferrest thou, and wilt thou have a story of mankind or of Jinn-kind?" "'Tis well! An thou hast espied aught with thine eyes and heard it with thine ears, tell it me." Then he bethought himself and said to me, "I conjure thee by my life, tell me a tale of the tales of the Jinn, and that which thou hast heard of them and seen of them!" I replied, "O my son, indeed thou conjurest me by a mighty conjuration; so lend an ear to the goodliest of stories, ay, and the strangest of them and the pleasantest and rarest." Quoth the Prince, "Say on, for I am attentive to thy speech"; and quoth I, "Hear then, O my son,

THE TALE OF THE DAMSEL TOHFAT AL-KULUB AND THE CALIPH HARUN AL-RASHID."

The Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds, Harun al-Rashid, had a boon-companion of the number of his boon-companions, by name Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Nadim al-Mausili,[1] who was the most accomplished of the folk of his time in smiting upon the lute; and of the Commander of the Faithful's love for him, he set apart for him a palace of the choicest of his palaces, wherein he was wont to instruct hand-maidens in the arts of singing and of lute-playing. If any slave-girl became, by his instruction, clever in the craft, he carried her before the Caliph, who bade her perform upon the lute; and if she pleased him, he would order her to the Harim; else would he restore her to Ishak's palace. One day, the Commander of the Faithful's breast was straitened; so he sent after his Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide and Ishak the cup-companion, and Masrur the eunuch, the Sworder of his vengeance; and when they came, he changed his habit and disguised himself, whilst Ja'afar and Ishak and Masrur and Al-Fazl[2] and Yúnus[3] (who were also present) did the like. Then he went out, he and they, by the postern, to the Tigris, and taking boat fared on till they came to near Al-Táf,[4] when they landed and walked till they came

1 *i.e.*, Isaac of Mosul, the greatest of Arab musicians; see vol. iii. night cclxxix.

2 The elder brother of Ja'afar, by no means so genial or fitted for a royal frolic. See Terminal Essay.

3 Ibn Habíb, a friend of Isaac, and a learned grammarian who lectured at Basrah.

4 A suburb of Baghdad, mentioned by Al-Mas'údi.

to the gate of the high street. Here there met them an old man, handsome in his hoariness and of a venerable bearing and a dignified, agreeable of aspect and apparel. He kissed the earth before Ishak al-Mausili (for that he knew only him of the company, the Caliph being disguised, and deemed the others certain of his friends), and said to him, "O my lord, there is presently with me a hand-maid, a lutanist, never saw eyes the like of her nor the like of her grace, and indeed I was on my way to pay my respects to thee and give thee to know of her; but Allah, of His favour, hath spared me the trouble. So now I desire to show her to thee, and if she take thy fancy, well and good; otherwise I will sell her." Quoth Ishak, "Go before me to thy quarters,[1] till I come to thee and see her." The old man kissed his hand and went away; whereupon quoth Al-Rashid to him, "O Ishak, who is yonder man and what is his want?" The other replied, "O my lord, this is a man Sa'id the Slave-dealer hight, and 'tis he that buyeth us maidens and Mamelukes. He declareth that with him is a fair slave, a lutanist, whom he hath withheld from sale, for that he could not fairly sell her till he had passed her before me in review." Quoth the Caliph, "Let us go to him so we may see her, by way of solace, and sight what is in the slave-dealer's quarters of slave-girls"; and quoth Ishak, "Command belongeth to Allah and to the Commander of the Faithful." Then he forewent them, and they followed in his track till they came to the slave-dealer's quarters, and found a building tall of wall and large of lodgment, with sleeping-cells and chambers therein, after the number of the slave-girls, and folk sitting upon the wooden benches. So Ishak entered, he and his company, and seating themselves in the place of honour, amused themselves by looking at the hand-maids and Mamelukes, and watching how they were bought and sold, till the vending came to an end, when some of the folk went away and some remained seated. Then cried the slave-dealer, "Let none sit with us except whoso purchaseth by the thousand dinars and upwards." Accordingly those present withdrew, and there remained none but Al-Rashid and his suite; whereupon the slave-dealer called the damsel, after he had caused set her a chair of Fawwák,[2] lined with Grecian brocade, and she was like the sun shining high in the shimmering sky. When she entered she saluted,

1 Containing the rooms in which the girl or girls were sold. See Pilgrimage, i. 87.

2 Dozy quotes this passage, but cannot explain the word Fawwák.

and sitting down, took the lute and smote upon it, after she had touched its strings and tuned it, so that all present were amazed. Then she sang thereto these couplets:—

Breeze o' Morn, an thou breathe o'er the loved one's land, * Deliver my greeting to all the dear band!
And declare to them still I am pledged to their love * And my longing excels all that lover unmanned:
O ye who have blighted my heart, ears and eyes, * My passion and ecstasy grow out of hand;
And torn is my sprite every night with desire, * And nothing of sleep can my eyelids command.

Ishak exclaimed, "Brava, O damsel! By Allah, this is a fair hour!" Whereupon she sprang up and kissed his hand, saying, "O my lord, in very sooth the hands stand still before thy presence and the tongues at thy sight, and the loquent when confronting thee wax dumb; but thou art the looser of the veil.[1]" Then she clung to him and cried, "Stand"; so he stood and said to her, "Who art thou and what is thy need?" She raised a corner of the veil, and behold she was a damsel as she were the full moon rising or the leven glancing, with two side-locks of hair which fell down to her anklets. She kissed his hand and said to him, "O my lord, know that I have been in these quarters some five months, during which I have withheld myself from sale till thou shouldst be present and see me; and yonder slave-dealer also made thy coming a pretext for not vending me, and forbade me for all I sought of him night and day that he should cause thee come hither and vouchsafe me thy company, and gar me and thee foregather." Quoth Ishak, "Tell me what thou wouldst have"; and quoth she, "I beseech thee, by Allah Almighty, that thou buy me, so I may be with thee by way of service." He asked, "Is that thy desire?" and she answered, "Yes." So Ishak returned to the slave-dealer and said to him, "Ho thou, Shaykh Sa'id!" Said the old man, "At thy service, O my lord," and Ishak continued, "In the corridor is a chamber, and therein wones a damsel pale and wan. What is her price in dirhams, and how much dost thou ask for her?" Quoth the slave-dealer, "She whom thou mentionest, O my lord, is called Tohfat al-Humaká[2]!" Ishak

1 "A passage has apparently dropped out here. The Khalif seems to have gone away without buying, leaving Ishac behind, whereupon the latter was accosted by another slave-girl, who came out of a cell in the corridor." So says Mr. Payne, vol. ii. 207. The "raiser of the veil" means a fitting purchaser.

2 *i.e.*, "Choice gift of the Fools," a skit upon the girl's name, "Tohfat al-Kulúb" = Choice gift of the Hearts. Her folly consisted in refusing to be

asked, "What is the meaning of Al-Humaka?" and the old man answered, "Her price hath been weighed and paid an hundred times, and she still saith, Show me him who would buy me; and when I show her to him, she saith, This one I mislike; he hath in him such and such a default. And in every one who would fain buy her she noteth some defect or other, so that none careth now to purchase her and none seeketh her, for fear lest she find some fault in him." Quoth Ishak, "She seeketh at this present to sell herself; so go thou to her and enquire of her and see her price and send her to the palace." Quoth Sa'id, "O my lord, her price is an hundred dinars, though, were she free of this paleness that is upon her face, she would be worth a thousand gold pieces; but wanton folly and wanness have diminished her value; and behold I will go to her and consult her of this." So he betook himself to her and enquired of her, "Wilt thou be sold to Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Mausili?" She replied, "Yes"; and he said, "Leave folly, for to whom doth it happen to be in the house of Ishak the cup-companion[1]?" Thereupon Ishak went forth the slave-dealer's quarters and overtook Al-Rashid who had preceded him; and they ceased not walking till they came to their landing-place, where they embarked in the boat and fared on to Thaghr al-Khánakah.[2] As for the slave-dealer, he sent the damsel to the house of Ishak al-Nadim, whose slave-girls took her and carried her to the Hammam. Then each damsel gave her somewhat of her gear and they decked her with earrings and bracelets, so that she redoubled in beauty and became as she were the moon on the night of its full. When Ishak returned home from the Caliph's palace, Tohfah rose to him and kissed his hand; and he saw that which the hand-maids had done with her, and thanked them for so doing and said to them, "Let her home in the house of instruction and bring her instruments of music, and if she be apt at song teach her; and may Allah Almighty vouchsafe her health and weal!" So there passed over her three months, while she homed with him in the house of instruction, and they brought her the instruments of music. Furthermore, as time went on, she was vouchsafed health and soundness, and her beauty waxed many times brighter than before, and her pallor was changed to white and red, so that she became a seduction to all who saw her.

sold at a high price, and this is often seen in real life. It is a *Pundonor* amongst good Moslems not to buy a girl and not to have marital relations with her, even when bought, against her will

1 "Every one cannot go to Corinth." The question makes the assertion emphatic.

2 *i.e.*, The Narrows of the (Dervishes') convent.

One day, Ishak bade summon all who were with him of slave-girls from the house of instruction, and carried them up to Al-Rashid's palace, leaving none in his house save Tohfah and a cookmaid; for that he thought not of Tohfah, nor did she come to his memory, and none of the damsels reminded him of her. When she saw that the house was empty of the slave-girls, she took the lute (now she was singular in her time for smiting upon the lute, nor had she her like in the world, no, not Ishak himself, nor any other) and sang thereto these couplets:—

When soul desireth one that is its mate * It never winneth dear desire of Fate:
My life for him whose tortures tare my frame, * And dealt me pine he can alone abate!
He saith (that only *he* to heal mine ill * Whose sight is medicine to my doleful state),
"O scoffer-wight, how long wilt mock my woe * As though did Allah nothing else create?"

Now Ishak had returned to his house on an occasion that called for him; and when he entered the vestibule, he heard a sound of singing, the like whereof he had never heard in the world, for that it was soft as the breeze and more strengthening than oil[1] of almonds. So the pleasure of it gat hold of him, and delight so seized him, that he fell down fainting in the vestibule. Tohfah heard the noise of footfalls, and, laying the lute from her hand, went out to see what was the matter. She found her lord Ishak lying aswoon in the entrance; so she took him up and strained him to her bosom, saying, "I conjure thee in Allah's name, O my lord, tell me, hath aught of ill befallen thee?" When he heard her voice, he recovered from his fainting, and asked her, "Who art thou?" She answered, "I am thy slave-girl, Tohfah"; and he said to her, "Art thou indeed Tohfah?" "Yes," replied she; and he, "By Allah, I had indeed forgotten thee, and remembered thee not till this moment!" Then he looked at her and said, "Verily, thy case is altered to other case, and thy wanness is changed to rosiness, and thou hast redoubled in beauty and loveliness. But was it thou who wast singing just now?" She was troubled and affrighted, and answered, "Even I, O my lord"; whereupon Ishak seized

1 Arab. "Akwà min dahni 'l-lauz." These unguents have been used in the East from time immemorial, whilst the last generation in England knew nothing of anointing with oil for incipient consumption. A late friend of mine, Dr. Stocks of the Bombay Establishment, and I, proposed it as long back as 1845; but in those days it was a far cry from Sind to London.

upon her hand, and carrying her into the house, said to her, "Take the lute, and sing; for never saw I nor heard thy like in smiting upon the lute; no, not even myself!" Quoth she, "O my lord, thou mockest me. Who am I that thou shouldst say all this to me? Indeed, this is but of thy kindness." Quoth he, "Nay, by Allah, I said but the truth to thee, and I am not of those on whom pretence imposeth. For these three months nature hath not moved thee to take the lute and sing thereto, and this is naught save a rare thing and a strange. But all this cometh of strength in the art and thy self-restraint." Then he bade her sing; and she said, "Hearkening and obedience." So she took the lute and tightening its strings to the sticking-point, smote thereon a number of airs, so that she confounded Ishak's wit, and for delight he was like to fly. Then she returned to the first mode and sang thereto these couplets:—

By your ruined stead aye I stand and stay, ⁂ Nor shall change or dwelling depart us tway!
No distance of homestead shall gar me forget ⁂ Your love, O friends, but I yearn alway:
Ne'er flies your phantom the babes of these eyne ⁂ You are moons in Night-tide's murkest array:
And with growing passion mine unrest grows ⁂ And each morn I find union dissolved in woes.

When she had made an end of her song and laid down the lute, Ishak looked fixedly on her, then took her hand and offered to kiss it; but she snatched it from him and said to him, "Allah, O my lord, do not that[1]!" Cried he, "Be silent. By Allah, I had said that there was not in the world the like of me; but now I have found my dinár in the art but a dánik,[2] for thou art more excellent of skill than I, beyond comparison or approximation or calculation! This very day will I carry[3] thee up to the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and when his glance lighteth on thee, thou wilt become a Princess of womankind. So Allah, Allah upon thee, O my lady, whenas thou becomest of the household of the Prince of True Believers, do not thou forget me!" She replied, "Allah, O my lord, thou art the root of my fortunes and in thee is my heart fortified." Thereat

1 The sequel will explain why she acted in this way.
2 *i.e.*, thou has made my gold piece (10 shill.) worth only a doit by thy superiority in the art and mystery of music.
3 Arab. "Uaddiki," Taadiyah (iid. of Adá, he assisted) means sending, forwarding. In Egypt and Syria we often find the form "Waddi" for Addi, imperative.

he took her hand and made a covenant with her of this, and she swore to him that she would not forget him. Then said he to her, "By Allah, thou art the desire of the Commander of the Faithful! Now take the lute and sing a song which thou shalt sing to the Caliph, when thou goest in to him." So she took the lute and tuning it, improvised these couplets:—

His lover had ruth on his woeful mood * And o'erwept him as still by his couch he[1] stood:
And garred him drink of his lip-dews and wine[2] * Ere he died and this food was his latest good.

Ishak stared at her and seizing her hand, said to her, "Know that I am bound by an oath that, when the singing of a damsel pleaseth me, she shall not end her song but before the Prince of True Believers. But now tell me, how came it that thou tarriedst with the slave-dealer five months and wast not sold to any one, and thou of this skill, especially when the price set on thee was no great matter?" Hereat she laughed and answered, "O my lord, my story is a wondrous and my case a marvellous. Know that I belonged aforetime to a Maghribi merchant, who bought me when I was three years old, and there were in his house many slave-girls and eunuchs; but I was the dearest to him of them all. So he kept me with him and used not to address me otherwise than, 'O daughterling,' and indeed to this moment I am a clean maid. Now there was with him a damsel, a lutanist, and she reared me and taught me the art, even as thou seest. Then was my master removed to the mercy of Allah Almighty,[3] and his sons divided his monies. I fell to the lot of one of them; but twas only a little while ere he had wasted all his wealth and there was left him naught of coin. So I gave up the lute, fearing lest I should fall into the hand of a man who knew not my worth, for well I wot that needs must my master sell me; and indeed but a few days passed ere he carried me forth to the quarters of the slave-merchant who buyeth damsels and displayeth them to the Commander of the Faithful. Now I desired to learn the art and mystery; so I refused to be sold to other than thou, until Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed me my desire of thy presence; whereupon I came out to thee, as soon as I heard of thy coming, and besought thee to buy me. Thou heartenedst my heart and boughtest me; and since I entered thy house, O my lord, I have not taken up the lute till now; but

1 Again "he" for "she."
2 *i.e.*, honey and wine
3 *i.e.*, he died.

to-day, when I was left private by the slave-girls, I took it; and my purpose in this was that I might see if my hand were changed[1] or not. As I was singing, I heard a footfall in the vestibule; so springing up, I laid the lute from my hand and, going forth to see what was to do, found thee, O my lord, after this fashion." Quoth Ishak, "Indeed, this was of thy fair fortune. By Allah, I know not that which thou knowest in this art!" Then he arose and opening a chest brought out therefrom striped clothes,[2] netted with jewels and great pearls and other costly gems, and said to her, "In the name of Allah, don these, O my lady Tohfah." So she arose and donned that dress and veiled herself and went up with Ishak to the palace of the Caliphate, where he made her stand without, whilst he himself went in to the Prince of True Believers (with whom was Ja'afar the Barmaki) and kissing the ground before him, said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought thee a damsel, never saw eyes of seer her like for excellence in singing and touching the lute; and her name is Tohfah." Al-Rashid asked, "And where be this Tohfah[3] who hath not her like in the world?" Answered Ishak, "Yonder she standeth, O Commander of the Faithful"; and he acquainted the Caliph with her case from first to last. Then said Al-Rashid, "'Tis a marvel to hear thee praise a slave-girl after this fashion. Admit her that we may look upon her, for verily the morning may not be hidden." Accordingly, Ishak bade admit her; so she entered, and when her eyes fell upon the Prince of True Believers, she kissed ground before him and said, "The Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the faithful Fold and Asylum of all who the true Creed hold and Quickener of justice in the Worlds threefold! Allah make thy feet tread on safest wise and give thee joy of what He gave thee in generous guise, and make thy harbourage Paradise and Hell-fire that of thine enemies!" Quoth Al-Rashid, "And on thee be the Peace, O damsel! Sit." So she sat down and he bade her sing; whereupon she took the lute and tightening its strings played thereon in many modes, so that the Prince of True Believers and Ja'afar were confounded in sprite and like to fly for delight. Then she returned to the first mode and improvised these couplets:—

O mine eyes! I swear by Him I adore, * Whom pilgrims seek thronging Arafát;

1 *i.e.*, if my hand had lost its cunning.

2 Arab. "Thiyáb 'Amúdiyah": 'Amúd = tent-prop or column, and Khatt 'Amúd = a perpendicular line.

3 *i.e.*, a choice gift The Caliph speaks half ironically. "Where's this wonderful present," etc. So further on when he compares her with the morning.

An thou call my name on the grave of me, * I'll reply to thy call though my bones go rot:
I crave none for friend of my heart save thee; * So believe me, for true are the well-begot.

Al-Rashid considered her comeliness and the goodliness of her singing and her eloquence, and what other qualities she comprised, and rejoiced with joy exceeding; and for the stress of that which overcame him of delight he descended from the couch and sitting down with her upon the floor, said to her, "Thou hast done well. O Tohfah. By Allah, thou art indeed a choice gift[1]!" Then he turned to Ishak and said to him, "Thou dealtest not justly, O Ishak, in the description of this damsel, nor didst thou fairly set forth all that she compriseth of charms and art; for that, by Allah, she is inconceivably more skilful than thou; and I know of this craft that which none knoweth save I!" Exclaimed the Wazir Ja'afar, "By Allah, thou sayst sooth, O my lord, O Commander of the Faithful. Indeed, she hath done away my wit, hath this damsel." Quoth Ishak, "By Allah, O Prince of True Believers, I had said that there was not on the face of the earth one who knew the art of the lute like myself; but when I heard her, my skill became nothing worth in mine eyes." Then said the Caliph to her, "Repeat thy playing, O Tohfah." So she repeated it and he cried to her, "Well done!" Moreover, he said to Ishak, "Thou hast indeed brought me a marvellous thing, one which is worth in mine eyes the empire of the world." Then he turned to Masrur the eunuch and said to him, "Carry Tohfah to the chamber of honour." Accordingly, she went away with the Castrato, and the Caliph looked at her raiment and ornaments, and seeing her clad in clothing of choice, asked Ishak, "O Ishak, whence hath she these robes?" Answered he, "O my lord, these are somewhat of thy bounties and thy largesse, and they are a gift to her from me. By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, the world, all of it, were little in comparison with her!" Then the Caliph turned to the Wazir Ja'afar and said to him, "Give Ishak fifty thousand dirhams and a robe of honour of the choicest apparel." "Hearing and obeying," replied Ja'afar, and gifted him with that which the Caliph ordered him. As for Al-Rashid, he was private with Tohfah that night and found her a pure virgin and rejoiced in her; and she took high rank in his heart, so that he could not suffer her absence a single hour, and committed to her the keys of the affairs of the realm, for that which he saw in her of good breeding and fine wit and leal

1 Again the usual pun upon the name.

will. He also gave her fifty slave-girls and two hundred thousand dinars, and a quantity of raiment and ornaments, gems and jewels worth the kingdom of Egypt; and of the excess of his love for her, he would not entrust her to any of the hand-maids or eunuchs; but, whenever he went out from her, he locked the door upon her and took the key with him, against he should return to her, forbidding the damsels to go in to her, of his fear lest they should slay her or poison her or practise on her with the knife; and in this way he abode awhile. One day, as she sang before the Commander of the Faithful, he was delighted with exceeding delight, so that he offered to kiss her hand[1]; but she drew it away from him and smote upon her lute and broke it and wept. Al-Rashid wiped away her tears and said, "O desire of the heart, what is it maketh thee weep? May Allah not cause an eye of thine to shed tears?" Said she, "O my lord, what am I that thou shouldst kiss my hand? Wilt thou have Allah punish me for this, and my term come to an end and my felicity pass away? For this is what none ever attained unto." He rejoined, "Well said, O Tohfah. Know that thy rank in my esteem is high, and for that which delighted me of what I saw in thee I offered to do this, but I will not return unto the like thereof; so be of good cheer, with eyes cool and clear, for I have no desire to other than thyself, and will not die but in the love of thee, and thou to me art queen this day, to the exclusion of all humankind." Therewith she fell to kissing his feet; and this her fashion pleased him, so that his love for her redoubled and he became unable to brook severance from her a single hour. Now Al-Rashid one day went forth to the chase and left Tohfah in her pavilion. As she sat perusing a book, with a candle-branch of gold before her, wherein was a perfumed candle, behold, a musk-apple fell down before her from the top of the saloon.[2] So she looked up and beheld the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim,[3] who saluted her with a salam and acquainted her with herself, whereupon Tohfah sprang to her feet and said, "O my lady, were I not of the number of the new,[4] I had daily sought thy service; so do not thou bereave me of those noble steps.[5]" The Lady Zubaydah called down

1 Throughout the East this is the action of a servant or a slave, practised by freemen only when in danger of life or extreme need and therefore humiliating.

2 It had been thrown down from the Mamrak, or small dome built over such pavilions for the purpose of light by day and ventilation by night. See vol. i. night xxv., where it is called by the Persian term, "Bádhanj."

3 The Nights have more than once applied this patronymic to Zubaydah See vol. vi. nights dccxcv. and dcccxxxvi.

4 Arab "Mutahaddisin" = novi homines, upstarts.

5 *i.e.*, thine auspicious visits.

blessings upon her and replied, "I knew this of thee; and, by the life of the Commander of the Faithful, but that it is not of my wont to go forth of my place, I had come out to do my service to thee." Then quoth she to her, "Know, O Tohfah, that the Commander of the Faithful hath deserted all his concubines and favourites on thine account, even myself hath he abandoned on this wise, and I am not content to be as one of the mistresses; yet hath he made me of them and forsaken me, and I have sought thee, so thou mayst beseech him to come to me, though it be but once a month, in order that I may not be the like of the hand-maids and concubines nor take rank with the slave-girls; and this is my need of thee." Answered Tohfah, "Hearkening and obedience! By Allah, O my lady, I would that he might be with thee a whole month and with me but one night, so thy heart might be heartened, for that I am one of thy hand-maids and thou in every case art my lady." The Princess Zubaydah thanked her for this and taking leave of her returned to her palace. When the Caliph came back from the chase and course, he betook himself to Tohfah's pavilion and bringing out the key opened the lock and went in to her. She rose to receive him and kissed his hand, and he gathered her to his breast and seated her on his knee.[1] Then food was brought to them, and they ate and washed their hands; after which she took the lute and sang till Al-Rashid was moved to sleep. When aware of this she ceased singing, and told him her adventure with the Lady Zubaydah, saying, "O Prince of True Believers, I would have thee favour me with a favour and hearten my heart and accept my intercession and reject not my supplication, but fare thee forthright to the Lady Zubaydah." Now this talk befell after he had stripped himself naked and she also had doffed her dress; and he said, "Thou shouldst have named this ere we stripped ourselves naked, I and thou!" But she answered, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, I did this not except in accordance with the saying of the poet in these couplets:—

Of all intercessions can none succeed, * Save whatso Tohfah bint Marján sue'd:
No intercessor who comes enveiled[2]; * She sues the best who sues mother-nude."

When Al-Rashid heard this, her speech pleased him and he

1 He being seated on the carpet at the time.

2 A quotation from Al-Farazdat, who had quarrelled with his wife Al-Howár (see the tale in Ibn Khallikan, i. 521), hence "the naked intercessor" became proverbial for one who cannot be withstood.

strained her to his bosom. Then he went forth from her and locked the door upon her, as before; whereupon she took the book and sat perusing it awhile. Presently, she set it aside and taking the lute, tightened its strings; and smote thereon, after a wondrous fashion, such as would have moved inanimate things to dance, and fell to singing marvellous melodies and chanting these couplets:—

Cease for change to wail, * The world blames who rail;
Bear patient its shafts * That for aye prevail.
How often a joy * Grief-garbed thou shalt hail:
How oft gladding bliss * Shall appear amid bale!

Then she turned and saw within the chamber an old man, handsome in his hoariness and stately of semblance, who was dancing in goodly and winning wise, a dance whose like none might dance. So she sought refuge with Allah Almighty from Satan the Stoned and said, "I will not give over what I am about, for whatso the Lord willeth He fulfilleth." Accordingly, she went on singing till the Shaykh came up to her and kissed ground before her, saying, "Well done, O Highmost of the East and the West! May the world be not bereaved of thee! By Allah, indeed thou art perfect of manners and morals, O Tohfat al Sudúr[1]! Dost thou know me?" Cried she, "Nay, by Allah, but methinks thou art of the Jann." Quoth he, "Thou sayst sooth; I am Abú al-Tawáif[2] Iblis, and I come to thee every night, and with me thy sister Kamariyah, for that she loveth thee and sweareth not but by thy life; and her pastime is not pleasant to her, except she come to thee and see thee whilst thou seest her not. As for me, I approach thee upon an affair, whereby thou shalt gain and rise to high rank with the kings of the Jann and rule them, even as thou rulest mankind; and to that end I would have thee come with me and be present at the festival of my daughter's wedding and the circumcision of my son[3]; for that the Jann are agreed upon the manifestation of thy command. And she answered, "Bismillah; in the name of the Lord.[4]" So she gave him the lute and he forewent her, till he came to the Chapel of Ease,[5] and

1 *i.e.*, Choice Gift of the Breasts, that is of hearts, the continens for the contentum.

2 Pron "Abuttawáif," the Father of the (Jinn-) tribes. It is one of the Moslem Satan's manifold names, alluding to the number of his servants and worshippers, so far agreeing with that amiable Christian doctrine, "Few shall be saved."

3 Mr. Payne supplies this last clause from the sequence.

4 *i.e.*, "let us go," with a euphemistic formula to defend her from evil influences Iblis uses the same word to prevent her being frightened.

5 Arab. "Al-Mustaráh," a favourite haunting place of the Jinn, like the Hammám and other offices for human impurity. For its six names, Al-Khalá, Al-Hushsh, Al-Mutawazzá, Al-Kanif, Al-Mustaráh, and Mirház, see Al-Mas'udi, chap. cxxvii., and Shirishi's commentary to Hariri's 47 Assembly

behold, therein was a door and a stairway. When Tohfah saw this, her reason fled; but Iblis cheered her with chat. Then he descended the steps and she followed him to the bottom of the stair, where she found a passage and they fared on therein till they came to a horse standing, ready saddled and bridled and accoutred. Quoth Iblis, "Bismillah, O my lady Tohfah!" and he held the stirrup for her. So she mounted and the horse heaved like a wave under her, and putting forth wings soared upwards with her, while the Shaykh flew by her side; whereat she was affrighted and clung to the pommel of the saddle[1]; nor was it but an hour ere they came to a fair green meadow, fresh-flowered as if the soil thereof were a fine robe, purfled with all manner bright hues. Amiddlemost that mead was a palace towering high in air, with crenelles of red gold, set with pearls and gems, and a two-leaved door; and about the gateway were much people of the chiefs of the Jann, clad in costliest clothing. When they saw the Shaykh, they all cried out, saying, "The Lady Tohfah is come!" And as soon as she reached the palace-gate they pressed forward in a body, and dismounting her from the horse's back, carried her into the palace and fell to kissing her hands. When she entered, she beheld a palace whereof seers ne'er saw the like; for therein were four halls, one facing other, and its walls were of gold and its ceilings of silver. It was high-builded of base, wide of space, and those who descried it would be posed to describe it. At the upper end of the hall stood a throne of red gold set with pearls and jewels, up to which led five steps of silver, and on its right and on its left were many chairs of gold and silver. Quoth Tohfah, "The Shaykh led me to the estrade and seated me on a chair of gold beside the throne, and over the daïs was a curtain let down, gold and silver wrought and broidered with pearls and jewels." And she was amazed at that which she beheld in that place and magnified her Lord (extolled and exalted be He!) and hallowed Him. Then the kings of the Jann came up to that throne and seated themselves thereon; and they were in the semblance of Adam's sons, excepting two of them, who appeared in the form and aspect of the Jann, each with one eye slit endlong and jutting horns and projecting tusks.[2] After this there came up a young lady, fair of

1 Which, in the East, is high and prominent whilst the cantle forms a back to the seat and the rider sits as in a baby's chair. The object is a firm seat when fighting, "across country" it is exceedingly dangerous

2 In Swedenborg's "Arcana Cœlestia" we read, "When man's inner sight is opened, which is that of his spirit; then there appear the things of

favour and seemly of stature, the light of whose face outshone that of the waxen flambeaux; and about her were other three women, than whom none fairer abode on face of earth. They saluted Tohfah with the salam and she rose to them and kissed ground before them; whereupon they embraced her after returning her greeting[1] and sat down on the chairs aforesaid. Now the four women who thus accosted Tohfah were the Princess Kamariyah, daughter of King Al-Shísbán, and her sisters; and Kamariyah loved Tohfah with exceeding love. So, when she came up to her, she fell to kissing and embracing her, and Shaykh Iblis cried, "Fair befall the accolade! Take me between you." At this Tohfah laughed and Kamariyah said, "O my sister, I love thee, and doubtless hearts have their witnesses,[2] for since I saw thee I have loved thee." Replied Tohfah, "By Allah, hearts have sea-like deeps, and thou, by Allah, art dear to me and I am thy hand-maid." Kamariyah thanked her for this and kissing her once more said, "These be the wives of the kings of the Jann: greet them with the salam! This is Queen Jamrah,[3] that is Queen Wakhímah, and this other is Queen Sharárah, and they come not but for thee." So Tohfah rose to her feet and bussed their hands, and the three queens kissed her and welcomed her and honoured her with the utmost honour. Then they brought trays and tables and amongst the rest a platter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and gems; its raised rims were of or and emerald, and thereon were graven[4] these couplets:—

To bear provaunt assigned, * By hands noble designed,
For the gen'rous I'm made * Not for niggardly hind!
So eat safe all I hold * And praise God of mankind.

After reading the verses they ate, and Tohfah looked at the two kings who had not changed shape, and said to Kamariyah, "O

another life which cannot be made visible to the bodily sight." Also "Evil spirits, when seen by eyes other than those of their infernal associates, present themselves by *correspondence* in the beast *(fera)* which represents their particular lust and life, in aspect direful and atrocious." These are the Jinns of Northern Europe

1 This exchange of salams was a sign of her being in safety.

2 Arab. "Shawáhid," meaning that heart testifies to heart.

3 *i.e.*, a live coal, afterwards called Zalzalah, an earthquake; see post, p. 318. "Wakhímah"=an unhealthy land, and "Sharárah"=a spark.

4 I need hardly note the inscriptions upon the metal trays sold to Europeans. They are usually imitation words so that infidel eyes may not look upon the formulæ of prayer; and the same is the case with table-cloths, etc., showing a fancy Tohgra or Sultanic sign-manual.

my lady, what be this feral and that other like unto him? By Allah, mine eye may not suffer the sight of them." Kamariyah laughed and answered, "O my sister, that is my sire Al-Shisban and the other is hight Maymún the Sworder; and of the arrogance of their souls and their insolence, they consented not to change their created shapes. Indeed, all of whom thou seest here are nature-fashioned like them; but on thine account they have changed favour, for fear lest thou be disquieted and for the comforting of thy mind, so thou mightest become familiar with them and be at thine ease." Quoth Tohfah, "O my lady, verily I cannot look at them. How frightful is this Maymun with his monocular face! Mine eye cannot brook the sight of him, and indeed I am in affright of him." Kamariyah laughed at her speech, and Tohfah continued, "By Allah, O my lady, I cannot fill my eye with the twain[1]!" Then cried her father Al-Shisban to her, "What be this laughing?" So she bespoke him in a tongue none understood but they two, and acquainted him with that which Tohfah had said; whereat he laughed a prodigious loud laugh as it were the roaring thunder. Presently they ate, and the tables were removed and they washed their hands; after which Iblis the Accursed came up to Tohfah and said to her, "O my lady, thou gladdenest the place and enlightenest and embellishest it with thy presence; but now fain would these kings hear somewhat of thy singing, for Night hath dispread her pinions for departure and there abideth of it but a little." Quoth she, "Hearing and obeying." So she took the lute, and touching its strings with rare touch, played thereon after wondrous wise, so that it seemed to those who were present as if the palace surged like a wave with them for the music. Then she began singing and chanting these couplets:—

Folk of my faith and oath, Peace with you be! * Quoth ye not I shall meet you, you meet me?
I'll chide you softerwise than breeze o' morn, * Sweeter than spring of coolest clarity.
I' faith mine eyelids are with tears chafed sore; * My vitals plain to you some cure to see.
My friends! Our union to disunion changed * Was aye my fear for 'twas my certainty.
I'll 'plain to Allah of all ills I bore; * For pine and yearning misery still I dree.

1 *i.e.*, I cannot look at them long.

The kings of the Jann were moved to delight by that sweet singing and seemly speech and thanked Tohfah therefore; and Queen Kamariyah rose to her and threw her arms round her neck and kissed her between the eyes, saying, "By Allah, 'tis good, O my sister and coolth of mine eyes and core of my heart!" Then said she, "I conjure thee by Allah, give us more of this lovely singing"; and Tohfah answered with "To hear is to obey." So she took the lute and playing thereon in a mode different from the former fashion, sang these couplets:—

I, oft as ever grows the pine of me, * Console my soul with hope thy sight to see.
Haply shall Allah join our parted lives, * E'en as my fortunes far from thee cast He!
Then oh! who thrallest me by force of love— * Seizèd by fond affection's mastery,
All hardships easy wax when thou art nigh; * And all the far draws near when near thou be.
Ah! be the Ruthful light to lover fond, * Love-lorn, frame-wasted, ready Death to dree!
Were hope of seeing thee cut off, my loved; * After thine absence sleep mine eyes would flee!
I mourn no worldly joyance, my delight * Is but to sight thee while thou seest my sight.

At this the accursed Iblis was hugely pleased and thrust up his finger behind him,[1] whilst Maymun danced and said, "O Tohfat al-Sudur, soften the sound[2]; for, as pleasure entereth into my heart, it arresteth my breath and blood." So she took the lute and altering the tune, played a third air; then she returned to the first and sang these couplets:—

The waves of your[3] love o'er my life have rolled; * I sink while I see you all aid withhold:
You have drowned my vitals in deeps of your love, * Nor can heart and sprite for your loss be consoled:
Deem not I forget my troth after you: * How forget what Allah decreed of old[4]?
Love clings to the lover who nights in grief, * And 'plains of unrest and of woes ensouled.

1 Evidently a diabolical way of clapping his hands in applause. This description of the Foul Fiend has an element of grotesqueness which is rather Christian than Moslem.

2 Arab. "Rikki al-Saut," which may also mean either "lower thy voice," or "change the air to one less touching."

3 "Your" for "thy."

4 *i.e.*, written on the "Guarded Tablet" from all eternity.

The kings and all those who were present rejoiced in this with joy exceeding, and the accursed Iblis came up to Tohfah and kissing her hand, said to her, "Verily there abideth but little of the night; so tarry with us till the morrow, when we will apply ourselves to the wedding[1] and the circumcision.[2]" Then all the Jann went away, whereupon Tohfah rose to her feet and Iblis said,

1 Arab. "Al-'Urs w'al-Tuhúr," which can only mean, "the wedding (which does not drop out of the tale) and the circumcision."

2 I here propose to consider at some length this curious custom, which has prevailed amongst so many widely separated races. Circumcision was doubtless practised from ages immemorial by the peoples of Central Africa, and Welcker found traces of it in a mummy of the xvith century B.C. The Jews borrowed it from the Egyptian priesthood and made it a manner of sacrament, "uncircumcised" being="unbaptised," that is, barbarian, heretic; it was a seal of reconciliation, a sign of alliance between the Creator and the Chosen People, a token of nationality imposed upon the body politic. Thus it became a cruel and odious protestation against the brotherhood of man, and the cosmopolitan Romans derided the verpæ ac verpi. The Jews also used the term figuratively as the "circumcision of fruits" (Lev. xix. 23), and of the heart (Deut. x. 16); and the old law gives copious historical details of its origin and continuance. Abraham was circumcised at æt. 99, and did the same for his son and household (Gen. xvii. 24-27). The rite caused a separation between Moses and his wife (Exod. iv. 25). It was suspended during the Desert Wanderings and was resumed by Joshua (v 3-7).

Amongst the early Christians opinions concerning the rite differed. Although the Founder of Christianity was circumcised, St. Paul, who aimed at a cosmopolitan faith, discouraged it in the physical phase. St. Augustine still sustained that the rite removed original sin despite the Fathers who preceded and followed him, Justus, Tertullian, Ambrose and others. But it gradually lapsed into desuetude and was preserved only in the outlying regions. Paulus Jovius and Munster found it practised in Abyssinia, but as a mark of nobility confined to the descendants of "Nicaules, queen of Sheba." The Abyssinians still follow the Jews in performing the rite within eight days after the birth, and baptise boys after forty and girls after eighty days When a circumcised man became a Jew he was bled before three witnesses at the place where the prepuce had been cut off, and this was called the "Blood of alliance." Apostate Jews effaced the sign of circumcision: so in 1 Matt. i. 16, fecerunt sibi præputia et recesserunt a Testamento Sancto. Thus making prepuces was called by the Hebrews Meshookim=recutitis, and there is an allusion to it in 1 Cor. vii. 18, 19, μὴ ἐπισπάσθαι (Farrar, Paul, ii 70). St. Jerome and others deny the possibility; but Mirabeau (Akropodie) relates how Father Conning by liniments of oil, suspending weights, and wearing the virga in a box gained in 43 days 7¼ lines. The process is still practised by Armenians and other Christians who, compelled to Islamise, wish to return to Christianity. I cannot, however, find a similar artifice applied to a circumcised clitoris. The simplest form of circumcision is mere amputation of the prepuce, and I have noted (vol. iv. night ccccxlv.) the difference between the Moslem and the Jewish rite, the latter according to some being supposed to heal in kindlier way. But the varieties of circumcision are immense Probably none is more terrible than that practised in the Province Al-Asir, the old Ophir, lying south of Al-Hijáz, where it is called Salkh, lit.=scarification The patient, usually from ten to twelve years old, is placed upon raised ground, holding in right hand a spear, whose heel rests upon his foot and whose point shews every tremour of the nerves. The tribe stands about him to pass judgment on his fortitude, and the barber performs the operation with the Jumbiyah-dagger, sharp as a razor. First he makes a shallow cut, severing

"Go ye up with Tohfah to the garden for the rest of the night." So Kamariyah took her and went with her into the garden, which contained all manner birds, nightingale and mocking-bird and

only the skin across the belly immediately below the navel and similar incisions down each groin; then he tears off the epidermis from the cuts downwards and flays the testicles and the penis, ending with amputation of the foreskin. Meanwhile the spear must not tremble, and in some clans the lad holds a dagger over the back of the stooping barber, crying, "Cut and fear not!" When the ordeal is over, he exclaims, "Allaho Akbar!" and attempts to walk towards the tents, soon falling for pain and nervous exhaustion, but the more steps he takes the more applause he gains. He is dieted with camel's milk, the wound is treated with salt and turmeric, and the chances in his favour are about ten to one. No body-pile or pecten ever grows upon the excoriated part, which preserves through life a livid, ashen hue. Whilst Mohammed Ali Pasha occupied the province he forbade "scarification" under pain of impalement, but it was resumed the moment he left Al-Asir. In Africa not only is circumcision indigenous, the operation varies more or less in the different tribes. In Dahome it is termed Addagwibi, and is performed between the twelfth and twentieth year. The rough operation is made peculiar by a double cut above and below; the prepuce being treated in the Moslem, not the Jewish fashion (loc. cit.). Heated sand is applied as a styptic, and the patient is dieted with ginger-soup and warm drinks of ginger-water, pork being especially forbidden. The Fantis of the Gold Coast circumcise in sacred places, *e.g.*, at Accra on a Fetish rock rising from the sea. The peoples of Sennaar, Taka, Masawwah and the adjacent regions follow the Abyssinian custom. The barbarous Bissagos and Fellups of North-Western Guinea make cuts on the prepuce without amputating it; while the Baquens and Papels circumcise like Moslems. The blacks of Loango are all "verpæ," otherwise they would be rejected by the women. The Bantu or Caffre tribes are circumcised between the ages of fifteen and eighteen; the "Fetish boys," as we call them, are chalked white and wear only grass belts; they live outside the villages in special houses under an old "medicine-man," who teaches them not only virile arts but also to rob and fight. The "man-making" may last five months, and ends in fêtes and dances; the patients are washed in the river, they burn down their quarters, take new names, and become adults, donning a kind of straw thimble over the prepuce. In Madagascar three several cuts are made, causing much suffering. The Polynesians circumcise when childhood ends and thus consecrate the fecundating organ to the Deity. In Tahiti the operation is performed by the priest, and in Tonga only the priest is exempt. The Maories, on the other hand, fasten the prepuce over the glans, and the women of the Marquesas Islands have shewn great cruelty to shipwrecked sailors who expose the glans. Almost all the known Australian tribes circumcise after some fashion: Bennett supposes the rite to have been borrowed from the Malays, while Gason enumerates the "Kurrawellie wonkauna" among the five mutilations of puberty. Leichhardt found circumcision about the Gulf of Carpentaria and in the river-valleys of the Robinson and Macarthur: others observed it on the Southern Coast and among the savages of Perth, where it is noticed by Salvado. James Dawson tells us "Circumciduntur pueri," etc., in Western Victoria. Brough Smyth, who supposes the object is to limit population (?), describes on the Western Coast and in Central Australia the "Corrobery"-dance and the operation performed with a quartz-flake. Teichelmann details the rite in Southern Australia, where the assistants—all men, women, and children being driven away—form a "manner of human altar" upon which the youth is laid for circumcision. He then receives the normal two names, public and secret, and is initiated into the mysteries proper for men. The Australians also for Malthusian reasons produce an artificial hypospadias, while the Karens of New Guinea only split

ring-dove and curlew,[1] and other than these of all the kinds. Therein were all manner of fruits: its channels[2] were of gold and silver, and the water thereof, as it broke forth of its conduits, was like the bellies of fleeing serpents, and, indeed, it was as it were the Garden of Eden.[3] When Tohfah beheld this, she called to mind her lord and wept sore and said, "I beseech Allah the Most High to vouchsafe me speedy deliverance, and return to my palace and to my high estate, and queendom and glory, and reunion with my lord and master, Al-Rashid." Then she walked about that garden and saw in its midst a dome of white marble, raised on columns of black teak whereto hung curtains purfled with pearls and gems. Amiddlemost this pavilion was a fountain, inlaid with all kinds of jacinths, and thereon a golden statue of a man, and beside it a little door. She opened the door and found herself in a long corridor: so she followed it and entered a Hammam-bath walled with all kinds of costly marbles and floored with a mosaic of pearls and jewels. Therein were four cisterns of alabaster, one facing other, and the ceiling of the bath was of glass coloured with all varieties of colours, such as confounded the understanding of those who have insight and

the prepuce longitudinally (Cosmos, p. 369, Oct. 1876): the indigens of Port Lincoln on the West Coast split the virga:—Fenditur usque ad urethram a parte infera penis between the ages of twelve and fourteen, says E. J. Eyre in 1845. Missionary Schürmann declares that they open the urethra. Gason describes in the Dieyerie tribe the operation "Kulpi," which is performed when the beard is long enough for tying. The member is placed upon a slab of tree bark, the urethra is incised with a quartz-flake mounted in a gum handle, and a splinter of bark is inserted to keep the cut open. Circumcision was also known to the New World. Herrera relates that certain Mexicans cut off the ears and prepuce of the newly-born child, causing many to die. The Jews did not adopt the female circumcision of Egypt described by Huet on Origen:—"Circumcisio feminarum fit resectione τῆς νυμφῆς (sive clitoridis) quæ pars in Australium mulieribus ita crescit ut ferro est coercenda." Here we have the normal confusion between excision of the nymphæ (usually for fibulation) and circumcision of the clitoris. Bruce notices this clitoridectomy among the Abyssinians. Werne describes the excision on the Upper White Nile, and I have noted the complicated operation among the Somali tribes. Girls in Dahome are circumcised by ancient *sages femmes*, and a woman in the natural state would be derided by everyone (See my Mission to Dahome, ii. 159). The Australians cut out the clitoris, and as I have noted elsewhere extirpate the ovary for Malthusian purposes (Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. viii. of 1884).

1 Arab "Kayrawán" which is still the common name for curlew; the peewit and plover being called (onomatopoetically) "Bíbat" and in Marocco Yahúdi, certain impious Jews having been turned into the Vanellus Cristatus which still wears the black skull-cap of the Hebrews.

2 Arab. "Sawáki," the leats which irrigate the ground and are opened and closed with the foot.

3 The eighth (in altitude) of the many-storied Heavens.

amazed the wit of every wight. Tohfah entered the bath, after she had doffed her dress, and behold the Hammam-basin was overlaid with gold set with pearls and red balasses and green emeralds, and other jewels: so she extolled Allah Almighty and hallowed Him for the magnificence of that which she saw of the appointments of that bath. Then she made her Wuzu-ablution in that basin and pronouncing the Prohibition,[1] prayed the dawn-prayer and what else had escaped her of orisons[2]; after which she went out and walked in that garden among jessamine and lavender and roses and chamomile and gillyflowers and thyme and violets and basil royal, till she came to the door of the pavilion aforesaid. There she sat down, pondering that which would betide Al-Rashid after her, when he should come to her apartment and find her not; and she plunged into the sea of her solicitude, till slumber overtook her and soon she slept. Presently she felt a breath upon her face; whereupon she awoke and found Queen Kamariyah kissing her, and with her her three sisters, Queen Jamrah, Queen Wakhímah and Queen Sharárah. So she arose and kissed their hands and rejoiced in them with the utmost joy, and they ceased not, she and they, to talk and converse, what while she related to them her history, from the time of her purchase by the Maghrabi to that of her coming to the quarters of the slave-dealer, where she besought Ishak al-Nadim to buy her,[3] and how she won union with Al-Rashid, till the moment when Iblis came to her and brought her to them. They gave not over talking till the sun declined and yellowed and the hour of its setting drew near and the day departed, whereupon Tohfah was urgent in supplication[4] to Allah Almighty, on the occasion of the sundown-prayer, that he would reunite her with her lord Al-Rashid. After this, she abode with the four queens, till they

1 Arab. "Ihramat li al-Salát," *i.e.*, she pronounced the formula of Intention (Niyat) without which prayer is not valid, ending with Allaho Akbar = Allah is All-great. Thus she had clothed herself, as it were, in prayer, and had retired from the world pro tem.

2 *i.e.*, the prayers of the last day and night which she had neglected while in company with the Jinns. The Hammam is not a pure place to pray in, but the Farz or Koranic orisons should be recited there if the legal term be hard upon its end.

3 Slaves, male as well as female, are as fond of talking over their sale as European dames enjoy looking back upon the details of courtship and marriage

4 Arab. "Du'á," = supplication, prayer, as opposed to "Salát" = divine worship, "prayers." For the technical meaning of the latter see vol. iii night cclix. I have objected to Mr Redhouse's distinction without a difference between Moslems' worship and prayer: voluntary prayers are not prohibited to them, and their praises of the Lord are mingled, as amongst all worshippers, with petitions.

arose and entered the palace, where she found the waxen tapers lit and ranged in candlesticks of gold and silver, and censing vessels of silver and gold filled with lign-aloes and ambergris, and there were the kings of the Jann sitting. So she saluted them with the salam, kissing the earth before them and doing them service; and they rejoiced in her and in her sight. Then she ascended the estrade and sat down upon her chair, whilst King Al-Shisban and King Al-Muzfir[1] and Queen Lúlúah[1] and other kings of the Jann sat on chairs, and they brought choice tables, spread with all manner meats befitting royalties. They ate their fill; after which the tables were removed and they washed their hands and wiped them with napkins. Then they brought the wine service and set on tasses and cups and flagons and beakers of gold and silver and bowls of crystal and gold; and they poured out the wines and they filled the flagons. Then Iblis took the bowl and signed to Tohfah to sing: and she said, "To hear is to obey!" So she hent the lute in hand and tuning it, sang these couplets:—

Drink wine, O ye lovers, I rede you alwày, * And praise his worth who loves night and day;
'Mid the myrtle, narcissus and lavender, * And the scented herbs that bedeck the tray.

So Iblis the Damned drank and said, "Brava, O desire of hearts! But thou owest me still another aria." Then he filled the cup and signed to her to sing. Quoth she, "Hearkening and obedience," and chanted these couplets:—

Ye wot, I am whelmed in despair and despight, * Ye dight me blight that delights your sight:
Your wone is between my unrest and my eyes; * Nor tears to melt you, nor sighs have might.
How oft shall I sue you for justice, and you * With a pining death my dear love requite?
But your harshness is duty, your farness near; * Your hate is Union, your wrath is delight:
Take your fill of reproach as you will: you claim * All my heart, and I reck not of safety or blame.

All present were delighted, and the sitting-chamber was moved like a wave with mirth, and Iblis said, "Brava, O Tohfat al-Sudur!" Then they left not liquor-bibbing and rejoicing and making merry and tambourining and piping till the night waned

1 Al-Muzfir=the Twister; Zafáir al-Jinn=Adiantum capillus veneris. Lúlúah=The Pearl, or Wild Heifer; see vol. vii. night dcccclvi.

and the dawn waxed near ; and indeed exceeding delight entered into them. The most of them in mirth was the Shaykh Iblis, and for the stress of that which befell him of joyance, he doffed all that was on him of coloured clothes and cast them over Tohfah, and among the rest a robe broidered with jewels and jacinths worth ten thousand dinars. Then he kissed the earth and danced, and thrust up his finger behind him, and hending his beard in hand, said to her, "Sing about this beard and endeavour after mirth and pleasance, and no blame shall betide thee for this." So she improvised and sang these couplets :—

Barbe of the olden, the one-eyed goat![1] * What words shall thy foulness o' deed denote ?
Be not of our praises so pompous-proud : * Thy worth for a dock-tail dog's I wot.
By Allah, to-morrow shall see me drub * Thy nape with a cow-hide and dust thy coat !

All those present laughed at her mockery of Iblis and wondered at the wittiness of her visnomy[2] and her readiness in versifying, whilst the Shaykh himself rejoiced and said to her, "O Tohfat al-Sudur, verily, the night be gone; so arise and rest thyself ere the day; and to-morrow there shall be naught save weal." Then all the kings of the Jinn departed, together with those who were present of guards, and Tohfah abode alone, pondering the case of Al-Rashid, and bethinking her of how it went with him after her going, and of what had betided him for her loss, till the dawn lightened, when she arose and walked about the palace. Suddenly she saw a handsome door; so she opened it and found herself in a flower-garden finer than the first—ne'er saw eyes of seer a fairer than it. When she beheld this garth, she was moved to delight, and she called to mind her lord Al-Rashid and wept with sore weeping and cried, "I crave of the bounty of Allah Almighty that my return to him and to my palace and to my home may be nearhand!" Then she walked about the parterres till she came to a pavilion, high-builded of base and wide of space, never espied mortal nor heard of a grander than it. So she entered and found herself in a long corridor, which led to a Hammam goodlier than that aforetime described, and its cisterns were full of rose-water mingled with musk. Quoth

1 Arab. "Bi jildi 'l-bakar." I hope that captious critics will not find fault with my rendering, as they did in the case of Fals ahmar=a red cent, vol. i. night xxxi.

2 Arab. "Farásah"=lit. knowing a horse. Arabia abounds in tales illustrating abnormal powers of observation. I have noted this in vol. vi. night dcccIxxxii.

Tohfah, "Extolled be Allah! Indeed, this[1] is none other than a mighty great king." Then she pulled off her clothes and washed her body and made her Ghusl-ablution of the whole person[2] and prayed that which was due from her of prayer from the evening of the previous day.[3] When the sun rose upon the gate of the garden and she saw the wonders thereof, with that which was therein of all manner blooms and streams, and heard the voices of its birds, she marvelled at what she beheld of the rareness of its ordinance and the beauty of its disposition, and sat musing over the case of Al-Rashid and pondering what was come of him after her. Her tears coursed down her cheeks, and the zephyr blew on her; so she slept and knew no more till she suddenly felt a breath on her side-face, whereat she awoke in a fright and found Queen Kamariyah kissing her, and she was accompanied by her sisters, who said, "Rise, for the sun hath set." So Tohfah arose and making the Wuzu-ablution, prayed her due of prayers[4] and accompanied the four queens to the palace, where she saw the wax candles lighted and the kings sitting. She saluted them with the salam and seated herself upon her couch; and behold, King Al-Shisban had shifted his semblance, for all the pride of his soul. Then came up Iblis (whom Allah ḍamn!) and Tohfah rose to him and kissed his hands. He also kissed her hand and blessed her and asked, "How deemest thou? Is not this place pleasant, for all its desertedness and desolation?" Answered she, "None may be desolate in this place"; and he cried, "Know that this is a site whose soil no mortal dare tread"; but she rejoined, "I have dared and trodden it, and this is one of thy many favours." Then they brought tables and dishes and viands and fruits and sweetmeats and other matters, whose description passeth powers of mortal man, and they ate their sufficiency; after which the tables were removed and the dessert-trays and platters set on, and they ranged the bottles and flagons and vessels and phials, together with all manner fruits and sweet-scented flowers. The first to raise the bowl was Iblis the Accursed, who said, "O Tohfat al-Sudur, sing over my cup." So she took the lute and touching it, carolled these couplets:—

Wake ye, Ho sleepers all! and take your joy * Of Time, and boons he deignèd to bestow;

1 *i.e.*, the owner of this palace.

2 She made the Ghusl not because she had had connection with a man, but because the impurity of Satan's presence called for the major ablution before prayer.

3 *i.e.*, she conjoined the prayers of nightfall with those of dawn.

4 *i.e.*, those of mid-day, mid-afternoon and sunset.

Then hail the Wine-bride, drain the wine-ptisane * Which poured from flagon, flows with flaming glow:
O Cup-boy, serve the wine, bring round the red[1] * Whose draught gives all we hope for here below:
What's worldly pleasure save my lady's face, * Draughts of pure wine and song of musico?

So Iblis drained his bowl and, when he had made an end of his draught, waved his hand to Tohfah; then, throwing off that which was upon him of clothes, delivered them to her. The suit would have brought ten thousand dinars, and with it was a tray full of jewels worth a mint of money. Presently he filled again and gave the cup to his son Al-Shisban, who took it from his hand and kissing it, stood up and sat down again. Now there was before him a tray of roses; so he said to her, "O Tohfah, sing thou somewhat upon these roses." She replied, "Hearkening and obedience," and chanted these two couplets:—

It proves my price o'er all the flowers that I * Seek you each year, yet stay but little stound:
And high my vaunt I'm dyèd by my lord * Whom Allah made the best e'er trod on ground.[2]

So Al-Shisban drank off the cup in his turn and said, "Brava, O desire of hearts!" and he bestowed on her that was upon him, to wit, a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with great unions and rubies and purfled with precious gems, and a tray wherein were fifty thousand dinars. Then Maymun the Sworder took the cup and began gazing intently upon Tohfah. Now there was in his hand a pomegranate-flower and he said to her, "Sing thou somewhat, O queen of mankind and Jinn-kind upon this pomegranate-flower; for indeed thou hast dominion over all hearts." Quoth she, "To hear is to obey"; and she improvised and sang these couplets:—

Breathes sweet the zephyr on fair partèrre; * Robing lute in the flamings that fell from air:
And moaned from the boughs with its cooing rhyme * Voice of ring-doves, plaining their love and care:
The branch dresses in suit of fine sendal green * And in wine-hues borrowed from bloom Gulnare.[3]

1 Arab. "Sahbá," red wine preferred for the morning draught.
2 The Apostle who delighted in women and perfumes. Persian poetry often alludes to the rose which, before white, was dyed red by his sweat
3 For the etymology of Julnár—Byron's "Gulnare"—see vol. v. night dccxxxix. Here the rhymer seems to refer to its origin, Gul (Arab. Jul) in Persian a rose; and Anár, a pomegranate, which in Arabic becomes Nár=fire.

Maymun the Sworder drained his bowl and said to her, "Brava, O perfection of qualities!" Then he signed to her and was absent awhile, after which he returned and with him a tray of jewels worth an hundred thousand ducats, which he gave to Tohfah. Thereupon Kamariyah arose and bade her slave-girl open the closet behind the Songstress, wherein she laid all that wealth; and committed the key to her, saying, "Whatso of riches cometh to thee, lay thou in this closet that is by thy side, and after the festivities, it shall be borne to thy palace on the heads of the Jinn." Tohfah kissed her hand, and another king, by name Munír,[1] took the bowl and filling it, said to her, "O ferly Fair, sing to me over my bowl somewhat upon the jasmine." She replied with, "Hearkening and obedience," and improvised these couplets:—

'Twere as though the Jasmine (when self she enrobes * On her boughs) doth display to my wondering eyne;
In sky of green beryl, which Beauty enclothes * Star-groups like studs of the silvern mine.

Munir drank off his cup and ordered her eight hundred thousand dinars, whereat Kamariyah rejoiced and rising to her feet, kissed Tohfah on her face and said to her, "Be the world never bereaved of thee, O thou who lordest it over the hearts of Jinn-kind and mankind!" Then she returned to her place, and the Shaykh Iblis arose and danced, till all present were confounded; after which the Accursed said, "Verily, thou embellishest my festivities, O thou who commandest men and Jinn and rejoicest their hearts with thy loveliness and the beauty[2] of thy faithfulness to thy lord. All that thy hands possess shall be borne to thee in thy palace and placed at thy service; but now the dawn is near-hand; so do thou rise and rest thee according to thy custom." Tohfah turned and found with her none of the Jinn; so she laid her head on the floor and slept till she had gotten her repose; after which she arose and, betaking herself to the lakelet, made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed. Then she sat beside the water awhile and meditated the matter of her lord Al-Rashid, and that which had betided him after her loss and wept with sore weeping. Presently, she heard a blowing behind her[3]; so she turned and

1 *i.e.*, "the brilliant," the enlightened.
2 *i.e.*, the moral beauty.
3 A phenomenon well known to spiritualists and to "The House and the Haunter." An old Dutch factory near Hungarian Fiume is famed for this mode of "obsession"; the inmates hear the sound of footfalls, etc., behind them, especially upon the stairs, and see nothing.

behold, a Head without a body and with eyes slit endlong: it was of the bigness of an elephant's skull and bigger, and had a mouth as it were an oven and projecting canines as they were grapnels, and hair which trailed upon the ground. So Tohfah cried, "I take refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned!" and recited the Two Preventives[1]; what while the Head drew near her and said, "Peace be with thee, O Princess of Jinn and men and union-pearl of her age and her time! Allah continue thee on life, for all the lapsing of the days, and reunite thee with thy lord the Imam[2]!" She replied, "And upon thee be Peace; O thou whose like I have not seen among the Jann!" Quoth the Head, "We are a folk who may not change their favours and we are hight Ghúls: mortals summon us to their presence, but we cannot present ourselves before them without leave. As for me, I have gotten leave of the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif to appear before thee, and I desire of thy favour that thou sing me a song, so I may go to thy palace and question its Haunters[3] concerning the plight of thy lord after thee and return to thee; and know, O Tohfat al-Sudur, that between thee and thy lord be a distance of fifty years' journey for the *bonâ-fide* traveller." She rejoined, "Indeed, thou grievest me anent him between whom and me is fifty years' journey"; but the Head[4] cried to her, "Be of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear, for the sovrans of the Jann will restore thee to him in less than the twinkling of an eye." Quoth she, "I will sing thee an hundred songs, so thou wilt bring me news of my lord and that which betided him after me." And quoth the Head, "Do thou favour me and sing me a song, so I may go to thy lord and fetch thee tidings of him, for that I desire, before I go, to hear thy voice, so haply my thirst[5] may be quenched." So she took the lute and tuning it sang these couplets:—

1 The two short Koranic chapters, The Daybreak (cxiii) and The Men (cxiv. and last) evidently so called from the words which occur in both (versets i., "I take refuge with"). These "Ma'úzatáni," as they are called, are recited as talismans or preventives against evil, and are worn as amulets inscribed on parchment; they are also often used in the five canonical prayers. I have translated them in vol. iii. night clxxvi.

2 The antistes or fugleman at prayer who leads off the orisons of the congregation; and applied to the Caliph as the head of the faith. See vol. ii. night lxxxi. and vol. iii. night cclxxv.

3 Arab. "Ummár," *i.e.*, the Jinn, the "spiritual creatures" which walk this earth, and other non-humans who occupy it.

4 A parallel to this bodiless Head is the Giant Face, which appears to travellers (who expect it) in the Lower Valley of the Indus. See Sind Re-visited, ii. 155.

5 Arab. "Ghalili" = my yearning.

They have marched, yet no empty stead left they * They are gone, nor heart grieves me that fled be they:
My heart forebode the bereaval of friends: * Allah ne'er bereave steads wherefrom sped be they!
Though they hid the stations where led were they, * I'll follow till stars fall in disarray!
Ye slumber, but wake shall ne'er fly these lids; * 'Tis I bear what ye never bore—well-away!
It had irked them not to farewell who fares * With the parting fires that my heart waylay.
My friends,[1] your meeting to me is much * But more is the parting befell us tway:
You're my heart's delight, or you present be * Or absent, with you is my soul for aye!

Thereupon the Head wept exceeding sore and cried, "O my lady, indeed thou hast solaced my heart, and I have naught but my life; so take it." She replied, "Nay, an I but knew that thou wouldst bring me news of my lord Al-Rashid, 'twere fainer to me than the reign of the world"; and the Head answered her, "It shall be done as thou desirest." Then it disappeared, and returning to her at the last of the night, said, "O my lady, know that I have been to thy palace and have questioned one of its Haunters of the case of the Commander of the Faithful, and that which befell him after thee; and he said:—When the Prince of True Believers came to Tohfah's apartment and found her not and saw no sign of her, he buffeted his face and head and rent his raiment. Now there was in thy chamber the Castrato, the chief of thy household, and the Caliph cried out at him, saying:—Bring me Ja'afar the Barmaki and his father and brother at this very moment! The Eunuch went out, bewildered in his wit for fear of the King, and when he stood in presence of Ja'afar he said to him, Come to the Commander of the Faithful, thou and thy father and thy brother. So they arose in haste and betaking themselves to the presence, said, O Prince of True Believers, what may be the matter? Quoth he, There is a matter which passeth description. Know that I locked the door and, taking the key with me, betook myself to my uncle's daughter, with whom I lay the night; but, when I arose in the morning and came and opened the door, I found no sign of Tohfah. Quoth Ja'afar:—O Commander of the Faithful have patience, for that the damsel hath been snatched away, and needs must she return, seeing that she took the lute with her, and 'tis her own lute.

1 Arab. "Ahbábu-ná" plur. for singular = my beloved.

The Jinns have assuredly carried her off, and we trust in Allah Almighty that she will return. Cried the Caliph :—This[1] is a thing which may nowise be! And he abode in her apartment, nor eating nor drinking, while the Barmecides besought him to fare forth to the folk; and he weepeth and tarrieth on such fashion till she shall return. This, then, is that which hath betided him after thee." When Tohfah heard his words, they were grievous to her and she wept with sore weeping; whereupon quoth the Head to her, "The relief of Allah the Most High is nearhand; but now let me hear somewhat of thy speech." So she took the lute and sang three songs, weeping the while. The Head exclaimed, "By Allah, thou hast been bountiful to me, the Lord be with thee!" Then it disappeared and the season of sundown came: so she rose and betook herself to her place in the hall; whereupon behold, the candles sprang up from under the earth and kindled themselves. Then the kings of the Jann appeared and saluted her and kissed her hands and she greeted them with the salam. Presently appeared Kamariyah and her three sisters, and saluted Tohfah and sat down; whereupon the tables were brought and they ate; and when the tables were removed there came the wine-tray and the drinking-service. So Tohfah took the lute, and one of the three queens filled the cup and signed to the Songstress. Now she had in her hand a violet, so Tohfah improvised these couplets :—

I'm clad in a leaf-cloak of green; * In an honour-robe ultramarine:
I'm a wee thing of loveliest mien * But all flowers as my vassals are seen:
An Rose title her "Morn-pride," I ween * Nor before me nor after she's Queen.

The queen drank off her cup and bestowed on Tohfah a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with red rubies, worth twenty thousand ducats, and a tray whereon were ten thousand sequins. All this while Maymun's eye was upon her, and presently he said to her, "Harkye, Tohfah! sing to me." But Queen Zalzalah cried out at him, and said "Desist,[2] O Maymun. Thou sufferest not Tohfah to pay heed to us." Quoth he, "I will have her sing to me": and many words passed between them and Queen Zalzalah cried aloud at him. Then she shook and became like unto the Jinns, and taking in her hand a mace of stone, said to him, "Fie

1 *i.e.*, her return.

2 Arab. "Arja'" lit. return! but here meaning to stop. It is much used by donkey-boys from Cairo to Fez in the sense of "Get out of the way." Hence the Spanish arre! which gave rise to arriero = a carrier, a muleteer.

upon thee! What art thou that thou shouldst bespeak us thus? By Allah, but for the respect due to kings and my fear of troubling the session and the festival and the mind of the Shaykh Iblis, I would assuredly beat the folly out of thy head!" When Maymun heard these her words, he rose, with the fire shooting from his eyes, and said, "O daughter of Imlák, what art thou that thou shouldst outrage me with the like of this talk?" Replied she, "Woe to thee, O dog of the Jinn, knowest thou not thy place?" So saying, she ran at him, and offered to strike him with the mace, but the Shaykh Iblis arose and casting his turband on the ground, cried, "Out on thee, O Maymun! Thou dost always with us on this wise. Wheresoever thou art present, thou troublest our pleasure! Canst thou not hold thy peace until thou go forth of the festival, and this bride-feast be accomplished? When the circumcision is at an end and ye all return to your dwellings, then do as thou willest. Fie upon thee, O Maymun! Wottest thou not that Imlak is of the chiefs of the Jinn? But for my good name, thou shouldst have seen what would have betided thee of humiliation and chastisement; yet on account of the festival none may speak. Indeed thou exceedest: dost thou not ken that her sister Wakhimah is doughtier[1] than any of the Jann? Learn to know thyself: hast thou no regard for thy life?" So Maymun was silent and Iblis turned to Tohfah and said to her, "Sing to the kings of the Jinns this day and to-night until the morrow, when the boy will be circumcised and each shall return to his own place." Accordingly she took the lute, and Kamariyah said to her (now she had a citron in hand), "O my sister, sing to me somewhat on this citron." Tohfah replied, "To hear is to obey," and improvising, sang these couplets:—

I'm a dome of fine gold and right cunningly dight; * And my sweetness of youth gladdeth every sight:
My wine is ever the drink of kings * And I'm fittest gift to the friendliest sprite.

At this Queen Kamariyah rejoiced with joy exceeding and drained her cup, crying, "Brava! O thou choice Gift of hearts!" Furthermore, she took off a sleeved robe of blue brocade, fringed with red rubies, and a necklace of white jewels, worth an hundred thousand ducats, and gave them to Tohfah. Then she passed the cup to her sister Zalzalah, who hent in her hand herb basil, and she said to Tohfah, "Sing to me somewhat on this basil."

1 Arab. "Afras," lit. = a better horseman.

She replied, "Hearing and obeying," and improvised and sang these couplets :—

I'm the Queen of herbs in the séance of wine * And in Heaven Na'ím are my name and sign :
And the best are promised, in garth of Khuld, * Repose sweet scents and the peace divine[1] :
What prizes then with my price shall vie ? * What rank even mine, in all mortal's eyne ?

Thereat Queen Zalzalah rejoiced with joy exceeding, and bidding her treasuress bring a basket, wherein were fifty pairs of bracelets and the same number of earrings, all of gold, crusted with jewels of price, whose like nor mankind nor Jinn-kind possessed, and an hundred robes of vari-coloured brocades and an hundred thousand ducats, gave the whole to Tohfah. Then she passed the cup to her sister Shararah, who had in her hand a stalk of narcissus; so she took it from her and turning to the Songstress, said to her, "O Tohfah, sing to me somewhat on this." She replied, "Hearkening and obedience," and improvised these couplets :—

With the smaragd wand doth my form compare ; * 'Mid the finest flowers my worth's rarest rare :
My eyes are likened to Beauty's eyne, * And my gaze is still on the bright parterre.

When she had made an end of her song, Shararah was moved to delight exceeding and, drinking off her cup, said to her, "Brava, O thou choice Gift of hearts!" Then she ordered her an hundred dresses of brocade and an hundred thousand ducats, and passed the cup to Queen Wakhimah. Now she had in her hand somewhat of Nu'uman's bloom, the anemone; so she took the cup from her sister and turning to the Songstress, said to her, "O Tohfah, sing to me on this." Quoth she, "I hear and I obey," and improvised these couplets :—

I'm a dye was dyed by the Ruthful's might ; * And all confess me the goodliest sight :
I began in the dust and the clay, but now * On the cheeks of fair women I rank by right.

Therewith Wakhimah rejoiced with joy exceeding and, drinking off the cup, ordered her twenty dresses of Roumí brocade and a tray wherein were thirty thousand ducats. Then she gave the cup to Queen Shu'á'ah,[2] Regent of the Fourth Sea, who took

1 A somewhat crippled quotation from Koran lvi. 87-88: "As for him who is of those brought near unto Allah, there shall be for him easance and basil and a Garden of Delights (Na'ím)."

2 *i.e.*, Queen Sunbeam.

it and said, "O my lady Tohfah, sing to me on the gillyflower." She replied, "Hearing and obeying," and improvised these couplets :—

The time of my presence ne'er draws to a close, * Amid all whose joyance with mirth o'erflows ;
When topers gather to sit at wine * Or in nightly shade or when morning shows,
I filch from the flagon to fill the bowls * And the crystal cup where the wine-beam glows.

Queen Shu'a'ah rejoiced with joy exceeding and, emptying her cup, gave Tohfah an hundred thousand ducats. Then up sprang Iblis (whom Allah curse !) and cried, "Verily, the dawn lighteneth" ; whereupon the folk arose and disappeared, all of them, and there abode not one of them save the Songstress, who went forth to the garden and, entering the Hammam, made her Wuzu-ablutions and prayed whatso lacked her of prayers. Then she sat down and when the sun rose, behold, there came up to her near an hundred thousand green birds, which filled the branches of the trees with their multitudes, and they warbled in various voices, whilst Tohfah marvelled at their fashion. Suddenly appeared eunuchs, bearing a throne of gold, studded with pearls and gems and jacinths, both white and red, and having four steps of gold, together with many carpets of sendal and brocade and Coptic cloth of silk sprigged with gold ; and all these they spread in the centre of the garden, and, setting up the throne thereon, perfumed the place with virgin musk, Nadd[1] and ambergris. After that there came a queen ; never saw eyes a fairer than she nor than her qualities ; she was robed in rich raiment, broidered with pearls and gems, and on her head was a crown set with various kinds of unions and jewels. About her were five hundred slave-girls, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons, screening her, right and left, and she among them like the moon on the night of its full, for that she was the most worthy of them in majesty and dignity. She ceased not walking till she came to Tohfah, whom she found gazing on her in amazement ; and when the Songstress saw her turn to her, she rose to her, standing on her feet, and saluted her and kissed ground between her hands. The queen rejoiced in her and putting out her hand to her, drew her to herself and seated her by her side on the couch ; whereupon the Songstress kissed her hands, and the queen said to her, "Know, O Tohfah, that all

1 See vol. i. night xxx. for this compound perfume which contains musk, ambergris, and other essences.

which thou treadest of these carpets belongeth not to any of the Jinn, who may never tread them without thy leave,[1] for that I am the queen of them all and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif Iblis sought my permission to hold festival[2] and prayed me urgently to be present at the circumcision of his son. So I despatched to him, in my stead, a slave-girl of my slave-girls, namely, Shu'á'ah, Queen of the Fourth Sea, who is vice-reine of my reign. When she was present at the wedding and saw thee and heard thy singing, she sent to me, informing me of thee and setting forth to me thy grace and amiability, and the beauty of thy breeding and thy courtesy.[3] So I am come to thee, for that which I have heard of thy charms, and hereby I do thee a mighty great favour in the eyes of all the Jann.[4]" Thereupon Tohfah arose and kissed the earth, and the queen thanked her for this and bade her sit. So she sat down and the queen called for food; when they brought a table of gold, inlaid with pearls and jacinths and jewels and bearing kinds manifold of birds and viands of various hues, and the queen said, "O Tohfah, in the name of Allah! Let us eat bread and salt together, I and thou." Accordingly the Songstress came forward and ate of those meats, and found therein somewhat the like whereof she had never eaten; no, nor aught more delicious than it, while the slave-girls stood around the table, as the white compasseth the black of the eye, and she sat conversing and laughing with the queen. Then said the lady, "O my sister, a slave-girl told me of thee that thou saidst:—How loathly is what yonder Jinni Maymun eateth[5]!" Tohfah replied, "By Allah, O my lady, I have not any eye that can look at him,[6] and indeed I am fearful of him." When the queen heard this, she laughed till she fell backwards and said, "O my sister, by the might of the graving upon the seal-ring of Solomon, prophet of Allah, I am queen over all the Jann, and none dare so much as cast on thee a glance of the eye"; whereat Tohfah kissed her hand. Then the tables were removed and the twain sat talking. Presently up came the kings of the Jinn from every side, and kissed ground before the queen and stood in her service; and she thanked them for this, but moved not for one of

1 I can hardly see the sequence of this or what the carpets have to do here.

2 Here, as before, some insertion has been found necessary.

3 Arab. "Dukhúlak" lit. = thy entering, entrance, becoming familiar.

4 Or, "and in this there shall be to thee great honour over all the Jinn."

5 Mr. Payne thus amends the text, "How loathly is yonder Genie Meimoun! There is no eating (in his presence)"; referring back to p. 305.

6 *i.e.*, "I cannot bear to see him!"

them. Then appeared the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif Iblis (Allah curse him!) and kissed the earth before her, saying, "O my lady, may I not be bereft of these steps[1]!" She replied, "O Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif, it behoveth thee to thank the bounty of the Lady Tohfah, who was the cause of my coming." Rejoined he, "Thou sayest sooth," and kissed ground. Then the queen fared on towards the palace, and there arose and alighted upon the trees an hundred thousand birds of manifold hues. The Songstress asked, "How many are these birds?" and Queen Wakhimah answered her, "Know, O my sister, that this queen is hight Queen al-Shahbá[2] and that she is queen over all the Jann from East to West. These birds thou seest are of her host, and unless they appear in this shape, earth would not be wide enough for them. Indeed, they came forth with her and are present with her presence at this circumcision. She will give thee after the measure of that which hath been given to thee from the first of the festival to the last thereof[3]; and indeed she honoureth us all with her presence." Then the queen entered the palace and sat down on the couch of the circumcision[4] at the upper end of the hall, whereupon Tohfah took the lute and pressing it to her breast, touched its strings suchwise that the wits of all present were bewildered, and Shaykh Iblis cried to her, "O my lady Tohfah, I conjure thee, by the life of this noble queen, sing for me and praise thyself and cross me not." Quoth she, "To hear is to obey; still, but for thine adjuration, I had not done this. Say me, doth any praise himself? What manner thing is this?" Then she improvised these couplets:—

> In all fêtes I'm Choice Gift[5] to the minstrel-race;
> Folk attest my worth, rank and my pride of place,
> While Fame, merit and praises with honour engrace.

Her verses pleased the kings of the Jann and they cried, "By Allah, thou sayst sooth!" Then she rose to her feet, hending lute in hand, and played and sang, whilst the Jinns and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif danced. Presently the Father of the Tribes came up to her bussing her bosom, and gave her a Bráhmani[6] carbuncle

1 *i.e.*, "May thy visits never fail me!"
2 Ash-coloured, verging upon white.
3 *i.e.*, "she will double thy store of presents."
4 The Arab boy, who, unlike the Jew, is circumcised long after infancy and often in his teens, thus making the ceremony conform after a fashion with our "Confirmation," is displayed before being operated upon, to family and friends; and the seat is a couch covered with the richest tapestry. So far it resembles the bride-throne.
5 *Tohfah.*
6 *i.e.*, Hindu, Indian

he had taken from the hidden hoard of Yáfis bin Núh[1] (on whom be the Peace), and which was worth the reign of the world; its light was as the sheen of the sun, and he said to her, "Take this and be equitable therewith to the people of the world.[2]" She kissed his hand and rejoiced in the jewel and said, "By Allah, this befitteth none save the Commander of the Faithful." Now Queen Al-Shahba laughed with delight at the dancing of Iblís and she said to him, "By Allah, this is a goodly pavane!" He thanked her for this and said to the Songstress, "O Tohfah, there is not on earth's face a skilfuller than Ishak al-Nadim[3]; but thou art more skilful than he. Indeed, I have been present with him many a time and have shown him positions[4] on the lute, and there has betided me with him that which betided. Indeed, the story of my dealings with him is a long one, but this is no time to repeat it; for now I would show thee a shift on the lute, whereby thou shalt be exalted over all folk." Quoth she, "Do what seemeth good to thee." So he took the lute and played thereon a wondrous playing with rare divisions and marvellous modulations, and showed her a passage she knew not; and this was goodlier to her than all that she had gotten. Then she took the lute from him and playing thereon, sang and presently returned to the passage which he had shown her; and he said, "By Allah, thou singest better than I!" As for Tohfah, it became manifest to her that her former practice was all of it wrong, and that what she had learnt from the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif Iblis was the root and foundation of all perfection in the art and its modes. So she rejoiced in that which she had won of skill in touching the lute far more than in all that had fallen to her lot of wealth and honour-robes, and kissed the Master's hand. Then said Queen Al-Shahba, "By Allah, O Shaykh, my sister Tohfah is indeed singular among the folk of her time, and I hear that she singeth upon all sweet-smelling blooms." Iblis replied, "Yes, O my lady, and I am in extremest wonderment thereat. But there remaineth somewhat of sweet-scented flowers, which she hath not besung, such as myrtle and tuberose and jessamine and the moss-rose and the like." Then the Shaykh signed to her to sing somewhat upon the rest of the flowers, that Queen Al-Shabba might hear, and she said, "Hearing and obey-

1 Japhet, son of Noah.

2 Mr. Payne translates, "Take this and glorify thyself withal over the people of the world." His reading certainly makes better sense, but I do not see how the text can carry the meaning. He also omits the bussing of the bosom, probably from artistic reasons.

3 A skit at Ishák, making the Devil praise him. See vol v. night dclxxxvii.

4 Arab. "Mawázi'" (plur. of Mauza') = lit. places, shifts, passages.

ing." So she took the lute and played thereon in many modes, then returned to the first and sang these couplets:—

I'm one of the lover retinue * Whom long pine and patience have doomèd rue:
And sufferance of parting from kin and friends * Hath clothed me, O folk, in this yellow hue:
Then, after the joyance had passed away, * Heart-break, abasement, and cark I knew,
Through the long, long day when the lift is light, * Nor, when night is murk, my pangs cease pursue:
So, 'twixt fairest hope and unfailing fear, * My bitter tears ever flow anew.

Thereat Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced with joy exceeding and cried, "Brava, O queen of delight! No one is able to describe thee. Sing to us on the Apple." Quoth Tohfah, "Hearkening and obedience." Then she recited these couplets:—

I surpass all forms in my coquetry * For mine inner worth and mine outer blee;
Tend me noble hands in the sight of all * And slake with pure waters the thirst of me;
My robe is of sendal, and eke my veil * Is of sunlight the Ruthful hath bidden be:
When my fair companions are marched afar, * In sorrow fro' home they are forced to flee:
But noble hands deign hearten my heart * With beds where I sit in my high degree[1];
And where, like full moon at its rise, my light * 'Mid the garden fruits thou shalt ever see.

Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced in this with exceeding joy and cried, "Brava! By Allah, there is none excelleth thee." Tohfah kissed the ground, then returned to her place and versified on the Tuberose, saying:—

I'm a marvel-bloom to be worn on head! * Though a stranger among you fro' home I fled:
Make use of wine in my company * And flout at Time who in languish sped.
E'en so doth camphor my hue attest, * O my lords, as I stand in my present stead.
So gar me your gladness when dawneth day, * And to highmost seat in your homes be I led:
And quaff your cups in all jollity, * And cheer and ease shall ne'er cease to be.

1 The bed (farsh) is, I presume, the straw-spread (?) store-room where the apples are preserved.

At this Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced with exceeding joy and cried, "Brava, O queen of delight! By Allah, I know not how I shall do to give thee thy due! May the Most High grant us the grace of thy long continuance!" Then she strained her to her breast and bussed her on the cheek; whereupon quoth Iblis (on whom be a curse!), "This is a mighty great honour!" Quoth the queen, "Know that this lady Tohfah is my sister, and that her biddance is my biddance and her forbiddance my forbiddance. So all of you hearken to her word and render her worshipful obedience." Therewith the kings rose in a body and kissed ground before Tohfah, who rejoiced in this. Moreover, Queen Al-Shahba doffed dress and habited her in a suit adorned with pearls, jewels and jacinths, worth an hundred thousand ducats, and wrote for her on a slip of paper[1] a patent appointing her to be her deputy. So the Songstress rose and kissed ground before the Queen, who said to her, "Of thy favour, sing to us somewhat concerning the rest of the sweet-scented flowers and herbs, so I may hear thy chant and solace myself with witnessing thy skill." She replied, "To hear is to obey, O lady mine," and, taking the lute, improvised these couplets:—

My hue excelleth all hues in light, * And I would all eyes should enjoy my sight;
My site is the site of fillets and pearls * Where the fairest brows are with jasmine dight:
My light's uprist (and what light it shows!) * Is a silvern zone on the waist of Night.

Then she changed the measure and improvised these couplets:—

I'm the gem of herbs, and in seasons twain * My tryst I keep with my lovers-train:
I stint not union for length of time * Nor visits, though some be of severance fain;
The true one am I and my troth I keep, * And, easy of plucking, no hand disdain.

Then, changing measure and the mode, she played so that she bewildered the wits of those who were present, and Queen Al-Shahba, moved to mirth and merriment, cried, "Brava, O queen of delight!" Presently she returned to the first mode and improvised these couplets on Nenuphar:—

I fear me lest freke espy me, * In air when I fain deny me;
So I root me beneath the wave, * And my stalks to bow down apply me.

1 Arab. "Farkh warak," which sounds like an atrocious vulgarism.

Hereat Queen Al Shahba rejoiced with exceeding joy, and cried, "Brava, O Tohfah! Let me hear more of thy chant." Accordingly, she smote the lute and changing the mode, recited on the Moss-rose these couplets:—

Look on Nasrín[1] those branchy shoots surround; * With greenest leafery 'tis deckt and crowned:
Its graceful bending stem draws every gaze * While beauteous bearing makes their love abound.

Then she changed measure and mode and sang these couplets on the Water-lily:—

O thou who askest Súsan[2] of her scent, * Hear thou my words and beauty of my lay.
"Emir am I whom all mankind desire" * (Quoth she) "or present or when ta'en away."

When Tohfah had made an end of her song, Queen Al-Shahba rose and said, "I never heard from any the like of this"; and she drew the Songstress to her and fell to kissing her. Then she took leave of her and flew away; and on like wise all the birds took flight with her, so that they walled the horizon; whilst the rest of the kings tarried behind. Now as soon as it was the fourth night there came the boy who was to be circumcised, adorned with jewels such as never saw eye nor heard ear of, and amongst the rest a crown of gold crusted with pearls and gems, the worth whereof was an hundred thousand sequins. He sat down upon the couch and Tohfah sang to him, till the chirurgeon[3] came and they snipped his foreskin in the presence of all the kings, who showered on him a mighty great store of jewels and jacinths and gold. Queen Kamariyah bade her Eunuchs gather up all this and lay it in Tohfah's closet, and it was as much in value as all that had fallen to her, from the first of the festivities to the last thereof. Moreover, the Shaykh Iblis (whom Allah curse!) bestowed upon the Songstress the crown worn by the boy and gave the circumcisee another, whereat Tohfah's reason took flight. Then the Jinn departed, in order of rank, whilst Iblis farewelled them, band after band. Seeing the Shaykh thus occupied with taking leave of the kings, Maymun seized his opportunity, the place being empty, and taking up Tohfah on his shoulders, soared aloft with her to

1 The Moss-rose; also the eglantine, or dog-rose, and the sweet-briar, whose leaf, unlike other roses, is so odorous.

2 The lily in Heb., derived by some from its six (shash) leaves, and by others from its vivid cheerful brightness. "His lips are lilies" (Cant. v. 13), not in colour, but in odoriferous sweetness.

3 The barber is now the usual operator; but all operations began in Europe with the "barber-surgeon."

the confines of the lift, and flew away with her. Presently, Iblis came to look for the Songstress and see what she purposed, but found her not and sighted the slave-girls slapping their faces: so he said to them, "Fie on you! What may be the matter?" They replied, "O our lord, Maymun hath snatched up Tohfah and flown away with her." When Iblis heard this, he gave a cry whereto earth trembled, and said, "What is to be done?" Then he buffeted his face and head, exclaiming, "Woe to you! This be none other than exceeding insolence. Shall he carry off Tohfah from my very palace and attaint mine honour? Doubtless, this Maymun hath lost his wits." Then he cried out a second time, so that the earth quaked, and rose on his wings high in air. The news came to the rest of the kings; so they flew after him and overtaking him, found him full of anxiety and affright, with fire issuing from his nostrils, and said to him, "O Shaykh al-Tawaif,[1] what is to do?" He replied, "Know ye that Maymun hath carried off Tohfah from my palace and attainted mine honour." When they heard this, they cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great. By God he hath ventured upon a grave matter and verily he destroyeth self and folk!" Then Shaykh Iblis ceased not flying till he fell in with the tribes of the Jann, and they gathered together a world of people, none may tell the tale of them save the Lord of All-might. So they came to the Fortress of Copper and the Citadel of Lead,[2] and the people of the sconces saw the tribes of the Jann issuing from every deep mountain-pass,[3] and said, "What be the news?" Then Iblis went in to King Al-Shisban and acquainted him with that which had befallen; whereupon quoth he, "Verily, Allah hath destroyed Maymun and his many! He pretendeth to possess Tohfah, and she is become queen of the Jann! But have patience till we devise that which befitteth in the matter of Tohfah." Iblis asked, "And what befitteth it to do?" And Al-Shisban answered, "We will fall upon him and kill him and his host with cut of brand." Then quoth Shaykh Iblis, "'Twere better to acquaint Queen Kamariyah and Queen Zalzalah and Queen Shararah and Queen Wakhimah; and when they are assembled, Allah shall ordain whatso He deemeth good in the matter of her release." Quoth Al-Shisban, "Right is thy rede," and

1 *Sic* in text (xii. 20). It may be a misprint for Abú al-Tawaif, but it can also mean "O Shaykh of the Tribes (of Jinns)!"

2 The capital of King Al-Shisban

3 Arab. "Fajj," the Spanish "Vega," which, however, means a mountain-plain, a plain.

they despatched to Queen Kamariyah an Ifrit hight Salhab who came to her palace and found her sleeping; so he roused her and she said, "What is to do, O Salhab?" Cried he, "O my lady, come to the succour of thy sister the Songstress, for Maymun hath carried her off and attainted thine honour and that of Shaykh Iblis." Quoth she, "What sayst thou?" and she sat up straight and cried out with a great cry. And indeed she feared for Tohfah and said, "By Allah, in very sooth she used to say that he gazed at her and prolonged the gaze; but ill is that whereto his soul hath prompted him." Then she rose in haste and mounting a Sataness of her Satans, said to her, "Fly." So she flew off with her and alighted in the palace of her sister Shararah, whereupon she sent for her sisters Zalzalah and Wakhimah and acquainted them with the tidings, saying, "Know that Maymun hath snatched up Tohfah and flown off with her swiftlier than the blinding leven." Then they all flew off in haste and lighting down in the place where were their father Al-Shisban, and their grandfather the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif, found the folk on the sorriest of situations. When their grandfather Iblis saw them, he rose to them and wept, and they all wept for the Songstress. Then said Iblis to them, "Yonder hound hath attainted mine honour and taken Tohfah, and I think not otherwise[1] but that she is like to die of distress for herself and her lord Al-Rashid, and saying:—The whole that they said and did was false.[2]" Quoth Kamariyah, "O grandfather mine, nothing is left for it but stratagem and device for her deliverance, for that she is dearer to me than everything; and know that yonder accursed when he waxeth ware of your coming upon him, will ken that he hath no power to cope with you, he who is the least and meanest of the Jann; but we dread that he, when assured of defeat, will slay Tohfah; wherefore nothing will serve but that we contrive a sleight for saving her; else will she perish." He asked, "And what hast thou in mind of device?" and she answered, "Let us take him with fair means, and if he obey, all will be well[3]; else will we practise stratagem against him; and expect not her deliverance from other than myself." Quoth Iblis, "The affair is thine; contrive what thou wilt, for that Tohfah is thy sister, and thy solicitude for her is more effectual than that of any other." So Kamariyah cried out to an Ifrit of

1 *i.e.*, I am quite sure emphatically.

2 *i.e.*, all the Jinn's professions of affection and promises of protection were mere lies.

3 In the original this apodosis is wanting; see vol. v nights dciii. and dcxvi.

the Ifrits and a calamity of the calamities,[1] by name Al-Asad al-Tayyár, the Flying Lion, and said to him, "Hie with my message to the Crescent Mountain,[2] the wone of Maymun the Sworder, and enter and say to him, My lady saluteth thee with the salam and asketh thee:—How canst thou be assured for thyself of safety, after what thou hast done, O Maymun? Couldst thou find none to maltreat in thy drunken humour save Tohfah, she too being a queen? But thou art excused, because thou didst not this deed, but 'twas thy drink, and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif pardoneth thee, because thou wast drunken. Indeed, thou hast attainted his honour; but now restore her to her palace, for that she hath done well and favoured us and rendered us service, and thou wottest that she is this day our queen. Belike she may bespeak Queen Al-Shahba, whereupon the matter will become grievous and that wherein there is no good shall betide thee; and thou wilt get no tittle of gain. Verily, I give thee good counsel, and so the Peace!" Al-Asad answered, "Hearing and obeying," and flew till he came to the Crescent Mountain, when he sought audience of Maymun, who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing ground before him, gave him Queen Kamariyah's message, which when he heard, he cried to the Ifrit, "Return whence thou comest and say to thy mistress:—Be silent and thou wilt show thy good sense. Else will I come and seize upon her and make her serve Tohfah; and if the kings of the Jinn assemble together against me and I be overcome by them, I will not leave her to scent the wind of this world, and she shall be neither mine nor theirs, for that she is presently my sprite[3] from between my ribs; and how shall any part with his sprite?" When the Ifrit heard Maymun's words, he said to him, "By Allah, O Maymun, art thou a changeling in thy wits, that thou speakest these words of my lady, and thou one of her page-boys?" Whereupon Maymun cried out and said to him, "Woe to thee, O dog of the Jinns! Wilt thou bespeak the like of me with these words?" Then he bade those who were about him bastinado Al-Asad, but he took flight and soaring high in air, betook himself to his mistress and told her the tidings: when she said, "Thou hast done well, O good knight!" Then she turned to her sire and said to him, "Hear that which I shall say to thee." Quoth he, "Say on"; and quoth she, "I rede thee take thy troops and go to him, for

1 Arab. "Dáhiyat al-Dawáhí"; see vol. i night xlvi.

2 Arab. "Al-Jabal al-Mukawwar" = Chaîne de montagnes de forme demi circulaire, from Kaur, a park, an enceinte.

3 Arab. "Rúhí" lit. my breath, the outward sign of life.

when he heareth this, he will in turn levy his many and come forth to thee; whereupon do thou offer him battle and prolong the fight with him and make a show to him of weakness and giving way. Meantime, I will devise me a device for getting at Tohfah and delivering her, what while he is busied with you in battle; and when my messenger cometh to thee and informeth thee that I have gotten possession of Tohfah and that she is with me, return thou upon Maymun forthwith and overthrow him and his hosts, and take him prisoner. But, an my device succeed not with him and we fail to deliver Tohfah, he will assuredly practise to slay her, without recourse, and regret for her will remain in our hearts." Quoth Iblis, "This is the right rede," and bade call a march among the troops, whereupon an hundred thousand knights, doughty wights of wai, joined themselves to him and set out for the country of Maymun. As for Queen Kamariyah, she flew off to the palace of her sister Wakhimah, and told her what deed Maymun had done and how he declared that, whenas he saw defeat nearhand, he would slay Tohfah; adding, "And indeed, he is resolved upon this; otherwise had he not dared to work such sleight. So do thou contrive the affair as thou see fit, for in rede thou hast no superior." Then they sent for Queen Zalzalah and Queen Shararah and sat down to take counsel, one with other, concerning what they had best do in the matter. Presently said Wakhimah, "'Twere advisable we fit out a ship in this our island-home and embark therein, disguised as Adam's sons, and fare on till we come to anchor under a little island that lieth over against Maymun's palace. There will we sit drinking and smiting the lute and singing; for Tohfah will assuredly be seated there overlooking the sea, and needs must she see us and come down to us, whereupon we will take her by force and she will be under our hands, so that none shall be able to molest her any more. Or, an Maymun be gone forth to do battle with the Jinns, we will storm his stronghold and take Tohfah and raze his palace and slay all therein. When he hears of this, his heart will be broken and we will send to let our father know, whereat he will return upon him with his troops and he will be destroyed, and we shall have rest of him." They answered her, saying, "This is a good counsel." Then they bade fit out a ship from behind the mountain,[1] and it was fitted out in less than the twinkling of an eye; so they launched it on the sea, and embarking therein, together with four thousand Ifrits, set out, intending for Maymun's palace. They

1 *i.e.*, Káf.

also bade other five thousand Ifrits betake themselves to the island under the Crescent Mountain, and there lie in wait for them ambushed well. Thus fared it with the kings of the Jann; but as regards Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif Iblis and his son Al-Shisban, the twain set out, as we have said, with their troops, who were of the doughtiest of the Jinn and the prowest of them in wing-flying and horsemanship, and fared on till they drew near the Crescent Mountain. When the news of their approach reached Maymun, he cried out with a mighty great cry to the troops, who were twenty thousand riders, and bade them make ready for departure. Then he went in to Tohfah and kissing her, said, "Know that thou art this day my life of the world, and indeed the Jinns are gathered together to wage war on me for thy sake. An I win the day from them and am preserved alive, I will set all the kings of the Jann under thy feet and thou shalt become queen of the world." But she shook her head and shed tears; and he said, "Weep not, for I swear by the virtue of the mighty inscription borne on the seal-ring of Solomon, thou shalt never again see the land of men; no, never! Say me, can any one part with his life? Give ear, then, to my words; else will I slay thee." So she was silent. And forthright he sent for his daughter, whose name was Jamrah,[1] and when she came, he said to her, "Harkye, Jamrah! Know that I am going to fight the clans of Al-Shisban and Queen Kamariyah and the Kings of the Jann. An I be vouchsafed the victory over them, to Allah be the laud and thou shalt have of me largesse[2]; but, an thou see or hear that I am worsted and any come to thee with ill news of me, hasten to kill Tohfah, so she may fall neither to me nor to them." Then he farewelled her and mounted, saying, "When this cometh about, pass over to the Crescent Mountain and take up thine abode there, and await what shall befall me and what I shall say to thee." And Jamrah answered, "Hearkening and obedience." Now when the Songstress heard these words, she fell to weeping and wailing and said, "By Allah, naught irketh me but severance from my lord Al-Rashid; however, when I am dead, let the world be ruined after me[3]?" And she was certified in herself that she was assuredly lost. Then Maymun set forth with his army and departed in quest of the hosts of the Jinn, leaving none in the palace save his daughter Jamrah and Tohfah, and an Ifrit which was dear to him. They fared on till they met with the army of Al-Shisban; and when

1 *i.e.*, a bit of burning charcoal.
2 Arab. "Al-yad al-bayzá",= lit. The white hand; see vol. iii., night cccvii.
3 Showing the antiquity of "Après moi le déluge."

the two hosts came face to face, they fell each upon other and fought a fight, a passing sore than which naught could be more. After a while, Al-Shisban's troops began to give way, and when Maymun saw them do thus, he despised them and made sure of victory over them. On this wise it befell them; but as regards Queen Kamariyah and her company they sailed on without ceasing, till they came under the palace wherein was Tohfah, to wit, that of Maymun the Sworder; and by the decree of the Lord of destiny, the Songstress herself was at that very time sitting on the belvedere of the palace, pondering the affair of Harun al-Rashid and her own, and that which had befallen her and weeping for that she was doomed to death. She saw the vessel and what was therein of those we have named, and they in mortal guise, and said, "Alas, my sorrow for this ship and for the men that be therein!" As for Kamariyah and her many, when they drew near the palace, they strained their eyes and seeing the Songstress sitting, cried, "Yonder sitteth Tohfah. May Allah not bereave us of her!" Then they moored their craft and, making for the island which lay over against the palace, spread carpets, and sat eating and drinking; whereupon quoth Tohfah, "Well come and welcome to yonder faces! These be my kinswomen, and I conjure thee by Allah, O Jamrah, that thou let me down to them, so I may sit with them awhile and enjoy kindly converse with them and return." Quoth Jamrah, "I may on no wise do that"; and Tohfah wept. Then the folk brought out wine and drank, while Kamariyah took the lute and sang these couplets :—

By Allah, had I never hoped to greet you * Your guide had failed on camel to seat you!
Far bore you parting from friend would greet you * Till meseems mine eyes for your wone entreat you.

When Tohfah heard this, she cried out so great a cry, that the folk heard her, and Kamariyah said, "Relief is nearhand." Then the Songstress looked out to them and called to them, saying, "O daughters of mine uncle, I am a lonely maid, an exile from kin and country: so for the love of Allah Almighty repeat that song!" Accordingly Kamariyah repeated it, and Tohfah swooned away. When she came to herself, she said to Jamrah, "By the rights of the Apostle of Allah (whom may He save and assain!) unless thou suffer me go down to them and look on them and sit with them for a full hour, I will hurl myself headlong from this palace, for that I am aweary of my life and know that I am slain to all certainty; wherefore will I kill myself, ere you pass sentence upon me." And she was instant with her in asking. When Jamrah

heard her words, she knew that, an she let her not down, she would assuredly destroy herself. So she said to her, "O Tohfah, between thee and them are a thousand cubits; but I will bring the women up to thee." The Songstress replied, "Nay, there is no help but that I go down to them, and solace me in the island and look upon the sea anear; then will we return, I and thou; for that an thou bring them up to us, they will be affrighted and there will betide them neither joy nor gladness. As for me, I wish but to be with them, that they may cheer me with their company, neither give over their merrymaking, so peradventure I may broaden my breast with them, and indeed I swear that needs must I go down to them; else I will cast myself upon them." And she cajoled Jamrah and kissed her hands, till she said, "Arise, and I will set thee down beside them." Then she took Tohfah under her armpit and, flying up swiftlier than the blinding leven, set her down with Kamariyah and her company; whereupon she went up to them and accosted them, saying, "Fear ye not: no harm shall befall you; for I am a mortal, like unto you, and I would fain look on you and talk with you and hear your singing." So they welcomed her and kept their places, whilst Jamrah sat down beside them and fell a-snuffing their odours and saying, "I smell the scent of the Jinn[1]! Would I wot whence it cometh!" Then said Wakhimah to her sister Kamariyah, "Yonder foul slut smelleth us, and presently she will take to flight; so what be this inaction concerning her[2]?" Thereupon Kamariyah put out an arm long as a camel's neck, and dealt Jamrah a buffet on the head, that made it fly from her body and cast it into the sea. Then cried she, "Allah is All-great[3]!" And they uncovered their faces, whereupon Tohfah knew them and said to them, "Protection!" Queen Kamariyah embraced her, as also did Queen Zalzalah and Queen Wakhimah and Queen Shararah, and the first-named said to her, "Receive the good tidings of assured safety, for there abideth no harm for thee; but this is no time for talk." Then they cried out, whereupon up came the Ifrits ambushed in that island, hending swords and maces in hand, and taking up Tohfah, flew with her to the palace and made themselves masters of it, whilst the Ifrit aforesaid, who was dear to Maymun and whose name was

1 Suggesting the nursery rhyme:
Fee, fo, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman.

2 *i.e.*, why not at once make an end of her.

3 The well-known war-cry.

Dukhán,[1] fled like an arrow and stinted not flying till he came to Maymun and found him fighting a sore fight with the Jinn. When his lord saw him, he cried out at him, saying, "Fie upon thee! Whom hast thou left in the palace?" Dukhan answered, saying, "And who abideth in the palace? Thy beloved Tohfah they have captured and Jamrah is slain, and they have taken the palace, all of it." At these ill tidings Maymun buffeted his face and head and said, "Oh! out on it for a calamity!" Then he cried aloud. Now Kamariyah had sent to her sire and reported to him the news, whereat the raven of the wold[2] croaked for the foe. So, when Maymun saw that which had betided him (and indeed the Jinn smote upon him and the wings of eternal severance overspread his host), he planted the heel of his lance in the earth and turning its head to his heart, urged his charger thereat and pressed upon it with his breast, till the point came forth gleaming from his back. Meanwhile the messenger had made the friendly host with the news of Tohfah's deliverance, whereat the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif rejoiced and bestowed on the bringer of lief tidings a sumptuous robe of honour and made him commander over a company of the Jann. Then they charged home upon Maymun's host, and wiped them out to the last man; and when they came to Maymun, they found that he had slain himself and was even as we have said. Presently Kamariyah and her sister Wakhimah came up to their grandfather and told him what they had done; whereupon he came to Tohfah and saluted her with the salam and congratulated her on deliverance. Then he made over Maymun's palace to Salhab; and taking all the rebel's wealth gave it to the Songstress, while the troops encamped upon the Crescent Mountain. Furthermore, the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif said to Tohfah, "Blame me not," and she kissed his hands, when behold, there appeared to them the tribes of the Jinn, as they were clouds, and Queen Al-Shahba flying in their van, drawn sword in grip. As she came in sight of the folk, they kissed ground between her hands and she said to them, "Tell me what hath betided Queen Tohfah from yonder dog Maymun, and why did ye not send to me and report to me?" Quoth they, "And who was this dog that we should send to thee on his account? Indeed, he was the least and lowest of the Jinn." Then they told her what Kamariyah and her sisters had done, and how

1 Lit. "Smoke," pop. applied, like our word, to tobacco. The latter, however, is not here meant.

2 Arab. "Ghuráb al-bayn," of the wold or of parting. See vol. v. night dccxxiv.

they had practised upon Maymun and delivered the Songstress from his hand, fearing lest he should slay her when he found himself defeated; and she said, "By Allah, the accursed was wont to lengthen his looking upon her!" And Tohfah fell to kissing Al-Shahba's hand, whilst the queen strained her to her bosom and kissed her, saying, "Trouble is past; so rejoice in assurance of deliverance." Then they rose and went up to the palace, whereupon the trays of food were brought and they ate and drank; after which, quoth Queen Al-Shahba, "O Tohfah, sing to us by way of sweetmeat[1] for thine escape, and favour us with that which shall solace our minds, for that indeed my thoughts have been occupied with thee." And quoth Tohfah, "Hearkening and obedience, O my lady." So she improvised and sang these couplets:—

Breeze of East[2] an thou breathe o'er the dear one's land * Speed, I pray thee, my special salute and salam:
And say them I'm pledged to love them and * In pine that passeth all pine I am.

Thereat Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced, and with her all who were present; and they admired her speech and fell to kissing her; and when she had made an end of her song, Queen Kamariyah said to her, "O my sister, ere thou go to thy palace, I would fain bring thee to look upon Al-'Anká,[3] daughter of Bahram Júr, whom Al-'Anka, daughter of the wind, carried off, and her beauty; for that there is not her fellow on earth's face." And Queen Al-Shahba said, "O Kamariyah, I also think it were well an I beheld her." Quoth Kamariyah, "I saw her three years ago; but my sister Wakhimah seeth her at all times, for she is near to her people, and she saith that there is not in the world fairer than she. Indeed, this Queen Al-Anka is become a byword for beauty and comeliness." And Wakhimah said, "By the mighty inscription on the seal-ring of Solomon, there is not her like for loveliness here below." Then said Queen Al-Shahba, "An it needs must be and the affair is as ye say, I will take Tohfah and go with her to Al-Anka, so she may look upon her!" So they all arose and repaired to Al-Anka, who abode in the Mountain Kaf. When

1 Arab. "Haláwah"; see vol. iii. night cclix.
2 Here the vocative particle "Yá" is omitted.
3 Lit. "The long-necked (bird)," before noticed with the Rukh (Roc) in vol iv. night cccciv. Here it becomes a Princess, daughter of Bahrám-i-Gúr (Bahram of Onager, his favourite game), the famous Persian king in the fifth century, a contemporary of Theodosius the younger and Honorius. The "Anká" is evidently the Iranian Simurgh.

she saw them, she drew near to them and saluted them, saying, "O my ladies, may I not be bereaved of you!" Quoth Wakhimah to her, "Who is like unto thee, O Anka? Behold, Queen Al-Shahba is come to thee." So Al-Anka kissed the queen's feet and lodged them in her palace; whereupon Tohfah came up to her and fell to kissing her and saying, "Never saw I a seemlier than this semblance." Then she set before them somewhat of food and they ate and washed their hands; after which the Songstress took the lute and smote it well; and Al-Anka also played, and they fell to improvising verses in turns, whilst Tohfah embraced Al-Anka every moment. Al-Shahba cried, "O my sister, each kiss is worth a thousand dinars"; and Tohfah replied, "And a thousand dinars were little therefor"; whereat Al-Anka laughed, and after nighting in her pavilion, on the morrow they took leave of her and went away to Maymun's palace. Here Queen Al-Shahba farewelled them and, taking her troops, returned to her capital, whilst the kings also went away to their abodes, and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif applied himself to diverting Tohfah till nightfall, when he mounted her on the back of one of the Ifrits and bade other thirty gather together all that she had gotten of treasure and raiment, jewels and robes of honour. Then they flew off, whilst Iblis went with her, and in less than the twinkling of an eye he set her down in her sleeping-room, where he and those who were with him bade adieu to her and went away. When Tohfah found herself in her own chamber and on her couch, her reason fled for joy, and it seemed to her as if she had never stirred thence: then she took the lute and tuned it, and touched it in wondrous fashion, and improvised verses and sang. The Eunuch heard the smiting of the lute within the chamber and cried, "By Allah, that is the touch of my lady Tohfah!" So he arose and went, as he were a madman, falling down and rising up, till he came to the Castrato on guard at the gate of the Commander of the Faithful and found him sitting. When his fellow neutral saw him, and he like a madman, slipping down and stumbling up, he asked him, "What aileth thee, and what bringeth thee hither at this hour?" The other answered, "Wilt thou not make haste and awaken the Prince of True Believers?" And he fell to crying out at him; whereupon the Caliph awoke and heard them bandying words together, and Tohfah's slave crying to the other, "Woe to thee! Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste." So quoth he, "O Sawáb, what hast thou to say?" and quoth the Chief Eunuch, "O our lord, the Eunuch of Tohfah's lodging hath lost his wits and crieth:

Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste!" Then said Al-Rashid to one of the slave-girls, "See what may be the matter." Accordingly she hastened to admit the Castrato, who entered at her order; and when he saw the Commander of the Faithful, he salamed not, neither kissed ground, but cried in his hurry, "Quick: up with thee! My lady Tohfah sitteth in her chamber, singing a goodly ditty. Come to her in haste and see all that I say to thee! Hasten! She sitteth awaiting thee." The Caliph was amazed at his speech and asked him, "What sayest thou?" He answered, "Didst thou not hear the first of the speech? Tohfah sitteth in the sleeping-chamber, singing and lute playing. Come thy quickest! Hasten!" Accordingly Al-Rashid sprang up and donned his dress; but he believed not the Eunuch's words, and said to him, "Fie upon thee! What is this thou sayest? Hast thou not seen this in a dream?" Quoth the Eunuch, "By Allah, I wot not what thou sayest, and I was not asleep"; and quoth Al-Rashid, "An thy speech be sooth-fast, it shall be for thy good luck, for I will free thee and give thee a thousand gold pieces; but, an it be untrue and thou have seen this in dreamland, I will crucify thee." The Eunuch said within himself, "O Protector, let me not have seen this in vision!" then he left the Caliph and running to the chamber door, heard the sound of singing and lute-playing; whereupon he returned to Al-Rashid and said to him, "Go and hearken and see who is asleep." When the Prince of True Believers drew near the door of the sleeping-chamber, he heard the sound of the lute and Tohfah's voice singing; whereat he could not restrain his reason, and was like to faint for excess of delight. Then he pulled out the key, but his hand refused to draw the bolt: however, after a while, he took heart, and applying himself, opened the door and entered, saying, "Methinks this is none other than a vision or an imbroglio of dreams." When Tohfah saw him, she rose and, coming to meet him, pressed him to her breast; and he cried out a cry wherein his sprite was like to depart, and fell down in a fit. She again strained him to her bosom, and sprinkled on him rose-water mingled with musk, and washed his face, till he came to himself as he were a drunken man, and shed tears for the stress of his joy in Tohfah's return to him, after he had despaired of her returning. Then she took the lute and smote thereon, after the fashion she had learnt from Shaykh Iblis, so that Al-Rashid's wit was bewildered for excess of joy, and his understanding was con-founded for exultation; after which she improvised and sang these couplets:—

That I left thee my heart to believe is unlief; * For the life that's in it ne'er leaveth; brief,
An thou say "I went," saith my heart "What a fib!" * And I bide 'twixt believing and unbelief.

When she had made an end of her verses, Al-Rashid said to her, "O Tohfah, thine absence was wondrous, yet is thy presence still more marvellous." She replied, "By Allah, O my lord, thou sayst sooth"; then, taking his hand, she said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, see what I have brought with me." So he looked and spied treasures such as neither words could describe nor registers could document, pearls and jewels, and jacinths and precious stones, and unions and gorgeous robes of honour, adorned with margarites and jewels, and purfled with red gold. There he beheld what he never had beheld all his life long, not even in idea; and she showed him that which Queen Al-Shahba had bestowed on her of those carpets which she had brought with her, and that throne, the like whereof neither Kisrà possessed nor Cæsar, and those tables inlaid with pearls and jewels, and those vessels which amazed all who looked on them, and that crown which was on the head of the circumcised boy, and those robes of honour which Queen Al-Shahba and Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif had doffed and donned upon her, and the trays wherein were those treasures; brief, she showed him wealth whose like he had never in his life espied, and which the tongue availeth not to describe, and whereat all who looked thereon were bewildered. Al-Rashid was like to lose his wits for amazement at this spectacle, and was confounded at that he sighted and witnessed. Then said he to Tohfah, "Come, tell me thy tale from beginning to end, and let me know all that hath betided thee, as if I had been present." She answered, "Hearkening and obedience," and acquainting him with all that had betided her first and last, from the time when she first saw the Shaykh-Abu al-Tawaif, how he took her and descended with her through the side of the Chapel of Ease; and she told him of the horse she had ridden, till she came to the meadow aforesaid, and described it to him, together with the palace and that was therein of furniture, and related to him how the Jinn rejoiced in her, and whatso she had seen of their kings, masculine and feminine, and of Queen Kamariyah and her sisters and Queen Shu'a'ah, Regent of the Fourth Sea, and Queen Al-Shahba, Queen of Queens, and King Al-Shisban, and that which each one of them had bestowed upon her. Moreover, she recited to him

the story of Maymun the Sworder, and described to him his fulsome favour, which he had not deigned to change, and related to him that which befell her from the kings of the Jinn, male and female, and the coming of the Queen of Queens, Al-Shahba, and how she had loved her and appointed her her vice-reine, and how she was thus become ruler over all the kings of the Jann; and she showed him the writ of investiture which Queen Al-Shahba had written her, and told him what had betided her with the Ghulish Head, when it appeared to her in the garden, and how she had despatched it to her palace, beseeching it to bring her news of the Commander of the Faithful and of what had betided him after her. Then she described to him the flower-gardens, wherein she had taken her pleasure, and the Hammam-baths inlaid with pearls and jewels, and told him that which had befallen Maymun the Sworder, when he bore her off, and how he had slain himself; in fine, she related to him everything she had seen of wonders and marvels, and that which she had beheld of all kinds and colours among the Jinn. Then she told him the story of Al-Anka, daughter of Bahram Jur, with Al-Anka, daughter of the wind, and described to him her dwelling-place and her island, whereupon quoth Al-Rashid, "O Tohfat al-Sadr,[1] tell me of Al-Anka, daughter of Bahram Jur; is she of the Jinn-kind or of mankind or of the bird-kind? For this long time have I desired to find one who should tell me of her." Tohfah replied, "'Tis well, O Commander of the Faithful. I asked the queen of this and she acquainted me with her case, and told me who built her the palace." Quoth Al-Rashid, "Allah upon thee, tell it me"; and quoth Tohfah, "I will well," and proceeded to tell him. And he was amazed at that which he heard from her and what she reported to him, and at that which she had brought back of jewels and jacinths of various hues and precious stones of many sorts, such as amazed the beholder and confounded thought and mind. As for this, Tohfah was the means of the enrichment of the Barmecides and the Abbasides, and they had endurance in their delight. Then the Caliph went forth and bade decorate the city: so they decorated it and the drums of glad tidings were beaten; and they made banquets to the people for whom the tables were spread seven days. And Tohfah and the Commander of the Faithful ceased not to enjoy the most delightsome of life and the most prosperous, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies; and this is all that hath come down to us of their story.

1 Choice Gift of the breast (or heart).

WOMEN'S WILES.[1]

On the following night Dunyazad said to her sister Shahrazad, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee tell us a tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours." She replied:—With love and gladness.[2] It hath reached me, O magnificent King, that whilome there was in the city of Baghdad, a comely youth and a well-bred, fair of favour, tall of stature, and slender of shape. His name was Alá al-Dín, and he was of the chiefs of the sons of the merchants and had a shop wherein he sold and bought. One day, as he sat in his shop, there passed by him a merry girl[3] who raised her head and, casting a glance at the young merchant, saw written in a flowing hand on the forehead[4] of his shop door these words, "THERE BE NO CRAFT SAVE MEN'S CRAFT, FORASMUCH AS IT OVERCOMETH WOMEN'S CRAFT." When she beheld this, she was wroth and took counsel with herself, saying, "As my head liveth, there is no help but I show him a marvel-trick of the wiles of women and put to naught this his inscription!" Thereupon she hied her home; and on the morrow she made her ready and donning the finest of dress, adorned herself with the costliest of ornaments and the highest of price and stained her hands with Henna. Then she let down her tresses upon her shoulders and went forth, walking with coquettish gait and amorous grace, followed by her slave-girl carrying a parcel, till she came to the young merchant's shop and, sitting down under pretext of seeking stuffs, saluted him with the salam and demanded of him somewhat of cloths. So he brought out to her various kinds, and she took them and turned them over, talking with him the while. Then said she to him, "Look at the shapeliness of my shape and my semblance! Seest thou in me aught of default?" He

1 From the Calc. Edit. (1814-18), Nights cxcvi.-cc., vol. ii., pp. 367-378. The translation has been compared and collated with that of Langlès (Paris, 1814), appended to his Edition of the Voyages of Sindbad. The story is exceedingly clever and well deserves translation.

2 It is regretable that this formula has not been preserved throughout The Nights: it affords, I have noticed, a pleasing break to the long course of narrative.

3 Arab. "Banát-al-hawá," lit. daughters of love, usually meaning an Anonyma, a fille de joie; but here the girl is of good repute, and the offensive term must be modified to a gay, frolicsome lass.

4 Arab. "Jabhat," the lintel opposed to the threshold.

replied, "No, O my lady"; and she continued, "Is it lawful in anyone that he should slander me and say that I am hump-backed?" Then she discovered to him a part of her bosom, and when he saw her breasts his reason took flight from his head and his heart clave to her and he cried, "Cover it up,[1] so may Allah veil thee!" Quoth she, "Is it fair of anyone to decry my charms?" and quoth he, "How shall any decry thy charms, and thou the sun of loveliness?" Then said she, "Hath any the right to say of me that I am lophanded?" and tucking up her sleeves, she showed him forearms as they were crystal; after which she unveiled to him a face, as it were a full moon breaking forth on its fourteenth night, and said to him, "Is it lawful and right for any to decry me and declare that my face is pitted with small-pox or that I am one-eyed or crop-eared?" and said he, "O my lady, what is it moveth thee to discover unto me that lovely face and those fair limbs, wont to be so jealously veiled and guarded? Tell me the truth of the matter, may I be thy ransom!" And he began to improvise[2]:—

White Fair now drawn from sheath of parted hair, * Then in the blackest tresses hid from sight,
Flasheth like day irradiating Earth * While round her glooms the murk of nighliest night.

——And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad her sister, "O sister mine, how delectable is this tale and how desirable!" She replied, saying, "And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night, Inshallah?"

The Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night.

Now when came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister Shahrazad, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours." She replied:—With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the girl said to the young merchant, "Know, O my lord, that I am a maid oppressed of my sire, who speaketh at me and saith to me, Thou art loathly of looks and semblance, and it besitteth not that thou wear rich raiment; for

1 Arab. "Ghatti," still the popular term said to a child showing its nakedness, or to a lady of pleasure who insults a man by displaying any part of her person.

2 She is compared with a flashing blade (her face) now drawn from its sheath (her hair) then hidden by it.

thou and the slave girls are like in rank, there is no distinguishing thee from them. Now he is a richard, having a mighty great store of money, and saith not thus save because he is a pinchpenny, and grudgeth the spending of a farthing; wherefore he is loath to marry me, lest he be put to somewhat of expense in my marriage, albeit Almighty Allah hath been bounteous to him and he is a man puissant in his time and lacking naught of worldly weal." The youth asked, "Who is thy father and what is his condition?" and she answered, "He is the Chief Kazi of the well-known Supreme Court, under whose hands are all the Kazis who administer justice in this city." The merchant believed her and she farewelled him and fared away, leaving in his heart a thousand regrets, for that the love of her had prevailed over him, and he knew not how he should win to her; wherefore he woned enamoured, love-distracted, unknowing if he were alive or dead. As soon as she was gone, he shut up shop and walked straightway to the Court, where he went in to the Chief Kazi and saluted him. The magistrate returned his salam and treated him with distinction and seated him by his side. Then said Ala al-Din to him, "I come to thee seeking thine alliance and desiring the hand of thy noble daughter." Quoth the Kazi, "O my lord merchant, welcome to thee and fair welcome; but indeed my daughter befitteth not the like of thee, neither beseemeth she the goodliness of thy youth, and the pleasantness of thy composition, and the sweetness of thy speech"; but Ala al-Din replied, "This talk becometh thee not, neither is it seemly in thee; if I be content with her, how should this vex thee?" So the Kazi was satisfied, and they came to an accord and concluded the marriage contract at a dower precedent of five purses[1] ready money and a dower contingent of fifteen purses, so it might be hard for him to put her away, her father having given him fair warning, but he would not be warned. Then they wrote out the contract-document, and the merchant said, "I desire to go in to her this night." Accordingly they carried her to him in procession that very evening, and he prayed the night-prayer and entered the private chamber prepared for him; but, when he lifted the head-gear from the bride's head and the veil from her face, and looked, he saw a foul face and a favour right fulsome; indeed he beheld somewhat whereof may Allah never show thee the like! loathly, dispensing from description, inas-

1 The "Muajjalah," or money paid down before consummation, was about £25; and the "Mu'ajjalah," or coin to be paid contingent on divorce, was about £75. In the Calc. Edit (ii. 371), both dowers are £35.

much as there were reckoned in her all legal defects.[1] So he repented, when repentance availed him naught, and knew that the girl had cheated him.——And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad, her sister, "O sister mine, how delectable is thy story, and how sweet!" She replied, saying, "And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night, an I be spared and suffered to live by the King, whom Almighty Allah preserve?"

The Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night.

Now whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister Shahrazad, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy story, which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours, for indeed 'tis a fine tale and a wondrous." She replied:—"With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O generous King, that the unhappy merchant carnally knew the loathly bride, sore against the grain, and abode that night troubled in mind, as he were in the prison of Al-Daylam.[2] Hardly had the day dawned when he arose from her side, and betaking himself to one of the Hammams, dozed there awhile, after which he made the Ghusl-ablution of ceremonial impurity[3] and donned his every day dress. Then he went out to the coffee house and drank a cup of coffee; after which he returned to his shop and, opening the door, sat down, with concern and chagrin manifest on his countenance. After an hour or so, his friends and intimates among the merchants and people of the market began to come up to him, by ones and twos, to give him joy, and said to him, laughing, "A blessing! a blessing! Where be the sweetmeats? Where be the coffee[4]? 'Twould seem thou hast forgotten us; and nothing made thee oblivious save that the charms of the bride have disordered thy wit and taken thy reason, Allah help thee! We give thee joy, we give thee joy." And they mocked at him whilst he kept silence

1 *i.e.*, all the blemishes which justify returning a slave to the slave-dealer.

2 Media: see vol. i. night xlvii. The "Daylamite prison" was one of many in Baghdad.

3 See vol. iv. night ccccxl. I may remark that this practice of bathing was kept up by both sexes in ancient Rome. The custom may have originated in days when human senses were more acute. I have seen an Arab horse object to be mounted by the master when the latter had not washed after embracing a woman.

4 On the morning after a happy night the bridegroom still offers coffee and Halwá to friends.

before them, being like to rend his raiment and shed tears for rage. Then they went away from him, and when it was the hour of noon, up came his mistress, the crafty girl, trailing her skirts and swaying to and fro in her gait, as she were a branch of Ban in a garden of bloom. She was yet more richly dressed and adorned, and more striking and cutting[1] in her symmetry and grace than on the previous day, so that she made the passers stop and stand in espalier to gaze upon her. When she came to Ala al-Din's shop, she sat down thereon and said to him, "Blessed be the day to thee, O my lord Ala al-Din! Allah prosper thee and be good to thee, and perfect thy gladness and make it a wedding of weal and welfare!" He knitted his brows and frowned in answer to her; then asked her, "Wherein have I failed of thy due, or what have I done to harm thee, that thou shouldst requite me after this fashion?" She answered, "Thou hast been no wise in default; but 'tis yonder inscription written on the door of thy shop that irketh me and vexeth my heart. An thou have the courage to change it and write up the contrary thereof, I will deliver thee from thine evil plight." And he answered, "Thy requirement is right easy: on my head and eyes!" So saying he brought out a sequin,[2] and summoning one of his Mamelukes, said to him, "Get thee to Such-an-one the Scribe, and bid him write us an epigraph, adorned with gold and lapis lazuli, in these words, THERE BE NO CRAFT SAVE WOMEN'S CRAFT, FOR INDEED THEIR CRAFT IS A MIGHTY CRAFT[3] AND OVERCOMETH AND HUMBLETH THE FALSES OF MEN." And she said to the white slave, "Fare thee forthright." So he repaired to the Scribe, who wrote him the scroll, and he brought it to his master, who set it on the door and asked the damsel, "Is thy heart satisfied?" She answered, "Yes! Arise forthwith and get thee to the place before the citadel, where do thou foregather with all the mountebanks and ape-dancers, and bear-leaders, and drummers and pipers, and bid them come to thee to-morrow early, with their kettle-drums and flageolets, whilst thou art drinking coffee with thy father-in-law the Kazi, and congratulate thee and wish thee joy, saying.—A blessing, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou art the vein[4] of our eye! We rejoice for thee, and if thou be

1 *i.e.*, more bewitching.
2 Arab. "Sharífi" more usually Ashrafi, the Port. Xerafim, a gold coin : 6s.-7s.
3 The oft-repeated Koranic quotation.
4 Arab. "'Irk": our phrase is "the apple of the eye."

ashamed of us, verily we pride ourselves upon thee; so, although thou banish us from thee, know that we will not forsake thee, albeit thou forsake us. And do thou fall to throwing dinars and dirhams amongst them; whereupon the Kazi will question thee, and do thou answer him, saying:—My father was an ape-dancer, and this is our original condition; but our Lord opened on us the gate of fortune, and we have gotten us a name amongst the merchants and with their provost. Upon this he will say to thee, Then thou art an ape-leader of the tribe of the mountebanks? and do thou rejoin, I may in nowise deny my origin for the sake of thy daughter and in her honour. The Kazi will say, It may not be that thou shalt be given the daughter of a Shaykh who sitteth upon the carpet of the Law, and whose descent is traceable by genealogy to the loins of the Apostle of Allah,[1] nor is it meet that his daughter be in the power of a man who is an ape-dancer, a minstrel. Then do thou reply, Nay, O Efendi, she is my lawful wife, and every hair of her is worth a thousand lives, and I will not put her away though I be given the kingship of the world. At last be thou persuaded to speak the word of divorce, and so shall the marriage be voided and ye be saved each from other." Quoth Ala al-Din, "Right is thy rede," and locking up his shop, betook himself to the place——And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased saying her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad, her sister, "O sister mine, how goodly is thy story, and how sweet!" She replied, saying, "And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night, Inshallah?"

The Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night.

And whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, pray finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours." She replied:—With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O generous King, that the young merchant betook himself to the place before the citadel, where he foregathered with the dancers, the drummers and pipers, and instructed them how they should do, promising them a mighty fine reward. They received his word with "Hearing and obeying"; and he betook himself on the morrow, after the morning prayer, to the presence of the Judge,

1 Meaning that he was a Sayyid or a Sharif.

who received him with humble courtesy and seated him by his side. Then he addressed him and began questioning him of matters of selling and buying and of the price current of the various commodities which were carried to Baghdad from all quarters, whilst his son-in-law replied to all whereof he was questioned. As they were thus conversing, behold, up came the dancers and drummers with their drums and pipers with their pipes, whilst one of their number preceded them, with a long pennon-like banner in his hand, and played all manner antics with voice and limbs. When they came to the Court-house, the Kazi cried, "I seek refuge with Allah from yonder Satans!" and the young merchant laughed but said naught. Then they entered and saluting his worship the Kazi, kissed Ala al-Din's hands and said, "A blessing on thee, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou coolest our eyes in whatso thou doest, and we beseech Allah for the enduring greatness of our lord the Kazi, who hath honoured us by admitting thee to his connection, and hath allotted to us a portion in his high rank and degree." When the Judge heard this talk, it bewildered his wit and he was dazed and his face flushed with rage, and quoth he to his son-in-law, "What words are these?" Quoth the merchant, "Knowest thou not, O my lord, that I am of this tribe? Indeed, this man is the son of my maternal uncle and that other the son of my paternal uncle, and if I be reckoned of the merchants, 'tis but by courtesy!" When the Kazi heard these words his colour changed —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, whereupon cried Dunyazad her sister, "O sister mine, how delectable is thy story and how desirable!" She replied, saying, "And where is its first compared with its last? But I will forthwith relate it to you an I be spared and suffered to live by the King, whom may Allah the Most High keep!" Quoth the King within himself, "By the Almighty, I will not slay her until I hear the end of her tale!"

The Two Hundredth Night of the Thousand Nights and a Night.

Now whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours." She replied:—With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious king, that the Kazi's colour changed, and he was troubled and waxed wroth with exceeding wrath, and was like to burst for stress of rage. Then said he to the young merchant,

"Allah forfend that this should last! How shall it be permitted that the daughter of the Kazi of the Moslems cohabit with a man of the dancers and vile of origin? By Allah, unless thou repudiate her forthright, I will bid beat thee and cast thee into prison and there confine thee till thou die. Had I foreknown that thou wast of them, I had not suffered thee near me, but had spat in thy face, for that thou art more ill-omened than a dog or a hog.[1]" Then he kicked him down from his place and commanded him to divorce; but he said, "Be ruthful to me, O Efendi, for that Allah is ruthful, and hasten not: I will not divorce my wife, though thou give me the kingdom of Al-Irak." The Judge was perplexed and knew that compulsion was not permitted of Holy Law[2]; so he bespake the young merchant fair and said to him, "Veil me,[3] so may Allah veil thee. An thou divorce her not, this dishonour shall cleave to me till the end of time." Then his fury gat the better of his wit and he cried, "An thou divorce her not of thine own will, I will forthright bid strike off thy head and slay myself; Hell-flame but not shame.[4]" The merchant bethought himself awhile, then divorced her with a manifest divorce and a public,[5] and on this wise he won free from that unwelcome worry. Then he returned to his shop and presently sought in marriage of her father her who had done with him what she did[6] and who was the daughter of the Shaykh of the guild of the blacksmiths. So he took her to wife and they abode each with other and lived the pleasantest of lives and the most delightsome, till the day of death: and praise be to Allah the Lord of the Three Worlds.

1 *i.e.*, than a Jew or a Christian. So the Sultan, when appealed to by these religionists, who were as usual squabbling and fighting, answered, "What matter if the dog tear the hog or the hog tear the dog?"

2 "The Shari'at," forbidding divorce by force.

3 *i.e.*, protect my honour.

4 For this proverb see vol. iv. night cccexi. I have remarked that "Shame" is not a passion in Europe as in the East; the Western equivalent to the Arab. "Hayâ" would be the Latin "Pudor."

5 Arab. "Talâkan bâinan," here meaning a triple divorce before witnesses, making it irrevocable.

6 *i.e.*, who had played him that trick.

NUR-AL DIN ALI OF DAMASCUS AND THE DAMSEL SITT AL-MILAH.[1]

THERE was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a merchant of the merchants of Damascus, by name Abu al-Hasan, who had money and means, slave-blacks and slave-girls, lands and gardens, houses and Hammams in that city; but he was not blessed with boon of child, and indeed his age waxed great. So he addressed himself to supplicate[2] Allah Almighty in private and in public and in his bows and his prostrations and at the season of prayer-call, beseeching Him to vouchsafe him, before his decease, a son who should inherit his wealth and possessions. The Lord answered his prayer; his wife conceived, and the days of her pregnancy were accomplished and her months and her nights; and the travail-pangs came upon her and she gave birth to a boy, as he were a slice of Luna. He had not his match for beauty, and he put to shame the sun and the resplendent moon; for he had a beaming face and black eyes of Bábilí witchery[3] and aquiline nose and carnelian lips; in fine, he was perfect of attributes, the loveliest of folk of his time, sans dubitation or gainsaying. His father joyed in him with exceeding joy and his heart was solaced and he was at last happy: he made banquets to the folk and he clad the poor and the widows. Presently he named the boy Sídí Nur al-Din Ali, and reared him in fondness and delight among the hand-maids and thralls. When he had passed his seventh year, his father put him to school, where he learned the sublime Koran and the arts of writing and reckoning; and when he reached his tenth year, he was taught horsemanship and archery, and to occupy himself with arts and sciences of all kinds, part and parts.[4] He grew up pleasant and polite, winsome and lovesome; a ravishment to all who saw him, and he inclined to companying with brethren and

1 The Bresl. Edit (vol xii. 50-116, nights dcccclviii-dcccclxv.) entitles it "Tale of Abu al-Hasan the Damascene and his son Sídí Nur al-Din 'Ali." Sidi means simply "my lord," but here becomes part of the name, a practice perpetuated in Zanzibar. See vol. iv. night cccclxxvii.

2 *i.e.*, at the hours of canonical prayers and other suitable times he made an especial orison (du'á) for issue.

3 See vol. i. night ix. for the traditional witchcraft of Babylonia.

4 *i.e.*, more or less thoroughly.

comrades, and mixing with merchants and travelled men. From these he heard tell of that which they had witnessed of the wonders of the cities in their wayfare, and heard them say, "Whoso journeyeth not enjoyeth naught[1]"; especially of the city of Baghdad. So he was concerned with exceeding concern for his lack of travel and disclosed this to his sire, who said to him, "O my son, why do I see thee chagrined?" Quoth he, "I would fain travel"; and quoth Abu al-Hasan, "O my son, none travelleth save those whose need is urgent and those who are compelled thereto by want. As for thee, O my son, thou enjoyest ample means; so do thou content thyself with that which Allah hath given thee and be bounteous to others, even as He hath been bountiful to thee; and afflict not thyself with the toil and tribulation of travel, for indeed it is said that travel is a piece of Hell-torment.[2]" But the youth said, "Needs must I journey to Baghdad, the House of Peace." When his father saw the strength of his resolve to travel, he fell in with his wishes and fitted him out with five thousand dinars in cash and the like in merchandise and sent with him two serving-men. So the youth fared forth, on the blessing of Allah Almighty[3]; and his parent went out with him, to take leave of him, and returned to Damascus. As for Nur al-Din Ali, he ceased not travelling days and nights till he entered Baghdad city, and laying up his loads in the Wakálah,[4] made for the Hammam-bath, where he did away that which was upon him of the soil of the road and doffing his travelling clothes, donned a costly suit of Yamaní stuff, worth an hundred dinars. Then he loaded his sleeve with a thousand miskals of gold and sallied forth a-walking and swaying gracefully as he paced along. His gait confounded all those who gazed upon him, as he shamed the branches with his shape and belittled the rose with the redness of his cheeks and his black eyes of Babilí witchcraft: thou wouldst deem that whoso looked on him would surely be preserved from bane and bale[5]; for he was even as saith of him one of his describers in these couplets :—

1 *i.e.*, "he who quitteth not his native country diverteth not himself with a sight of the wonders of the world."

2 For similar sayings, see vol vii. night dcccclxvi. and my Pilgrimage i. 127.

3 *i.e.*, relying upon, etc.

4 The Egyptian term for a khan, called in Persia caravanserai (karwán-serái); and in Marocco funduk, from the Greek; whence the Spanish "fonda." See vol. i. night ix.

5 Arab. "Baliyah," to jingle with "Bábiliyah."

Thy haters and enviers say for jeer * A true say that profits what ears will hear;
"No boast is his whom the gear adorns; * The boast be his who adorns the gear!"

So Sidi Nur al-Din went walking in the highways of the city and viewing its edifices and its bazars and thoroughfares and gazing on its folk. Presently, Abú Nowás met him. (Now he was of those of whom it is said, "They love fair lads," and indeed there is said what is said concerning him.) When he saw Nur al-Din Ali, he stared at him in amazement and exclaimed, "Say, I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak!" Then he accosted the youth and saluting him, asked him, "Why do I see my lord lone and lorn? Meseemeth thou art a stranger and knowest not this country; so, with leave of my lord, I will put myself at his service and acquaint him with the streets, for that I know this city." Nur al-Din answered, "This will be of thy favour, O nuncle." Abu Nowas rejoiced at this and fared on with him, showing him the streets and bazars, till they came to the house of a slave-dealer, where he stopped and said to the youth, "From what city art thou?" "From Damascus," replied Nur al-Din; and Abu Nowas said, "By Allah, thou art from a blessed city, even as saith of it the poet in these couplets:—

Now is Damascus a garth adored * For her seekers, the Houris and Paradise-boys."

Sidi Nur al-Din thanked him and the twain entered the mansion of the slave-merchant. When the people of the house saw Abu Nowas, they rose to do him reverence, for that which they knew of his rank with the Commander of the Faithful; and the slave-dealer himself came up to them with two chairs whereon they seated themselves. Then the slave-merchant went inside and returning with a slave-girl, as she were a branch of Ban or a rattan-cane, clad in a vest of damask silk and tired with a black and white head dress whose ends fell down over her face, seated her on a chair of ebony; after which he cried to those who were present, "I will discover to you a favour as it were a full moon breaking forth from under a cloud-bank." They replied, "Do so"; whereupon he unveiled the damsel's face and behold, she was like the shining sun, with shapely shape and dawn-bright cheeks and thready waist and heavy hips; brief, she was endowed with an elegance, whose description is unfound, and was even as saith of her the poet[1]:—

1 The lines are in vol. vi. night dcccl*xvi. and vol. vii. night dcccl. I quote Mr. Payne.

A fair one, to idolaters if she herself should show, * They'd leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know;
And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, * Assuredly the salt sea's floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.

The dealer stood at the hand-maid's head and one of the merchants said, "I bid a thousand dinars for her." Quoth another, "I bid one thousand one hundred dinars"; and a third, "I bid twelve hundred." Then said a fourth merchant, "Be she mine for fourteen hundred ducats." And the biddings standing still at that sum, her owner said, "I will not sell her save with her consent: an if she desire to be sold, I will sell her to whom she willeth." The slave-dealer asked him, "What is her name?" Answered the other, "Her name is "Sitt al-Miláh[1]"; whereupon the dealer said to her, "With thy leave, I will sell thee to yonder merchant for this price of fourteen hundred dinars." Quoth she, "Come hither to me." So the man-vendor came up to her, and when he drew near she gave him a kick with her foot and cast him to the ground, saying, "I will not have that old-ster." The slave-dealer arose, shaking the dust from his dress and head, and cried, "Who biddeth more of us? Who is desirous[2]?" Said one of the merchants, "I," and the dealer said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, shall I sell thee to this merchant?" She replied "Come hither to me"; but he rejoined, "Nay; speak and I will hear thee from my place, for I will not trust myself to thee nor hold myself safe when near thee." So she cried, "Indeed, I will not have him." Then the slave-dealer looked at her and seeing her fix eyes on the young Damascene, for that in very deed he had fascinated her with his beauty and loveliness, went up to him and said to him, "O my lord, art thou a looker-on or a buyer? Tell me." Quoth Nur al-Din, "I am both looker-on and buyer. Wilt thou sell me yonder slave-girl for sixteen hundred ducats?" And he pulled out the purse of gold. Hereupon the dealer returned, dancing and clapping his hands and saying, "So be it, so be it, or not at all!" Then he came to the damsel and said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, shall I sell thee to yonder young Damascene for sixteen hundred dinars?" But she answered, "No," of bashfulness before her master and the by-standers; whereupon the people of the bazar and the slave-merchant departed, and Abu Nowas and Ali Nur al-Din arose and went each his own way, whilst the damsel returned to her owner's house, full of love for the young Damascene. When the

1 Lady or princess of the Fair (ones).
2 *i.e.*, of buying.

night darkened on her, she called him to mind and her heart hung to him and sleep visited her not; and on this wise she abode days and nights, till she sickened and abstained from food. So her lord went in to her and asked her, "O Sitt al-Milah, how findest thou thyself?" Answered she, "O my lord, dead without chance of deliverance, and I beseech thee to bring me my shroud, so I may look upon it ere I die." Therewith he went out from her, sore concerned for her, and betaking himself to the bazar, found a friend of his, a draper, who had been present on the day when the damsel was cried for sale. Quoth his friend to him, "Why do I see thee troubled?" and quoth he, "Sitt al-Milah is at the point of death, and for three days she hath neither eaten nor drunken. I questioned her to-day of her case and she said:—O my lord, buy me a shroud so I may look upon it ere I die." The draper replied, "Methinks naught aileth her but that she is in love with the young Damascene, and I counsel thee to mention his name to her, and declare to her that he hath foregathered with thee on her account, and is desirous of coming to thy quarters, so he may hear somewhat of her singing. An she say:—I reck not of him, for there is that to do with me which distracteth me from the Damascene and from other than he, know that she saith sooth concerning her sickness; but, an she say thee other than this, acquaint me therewith." So the man returned to his lodging and going in to his slave-girl said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, I went out for thy need, and there met me the young man of Damascus, and he saluted me with the salam and saluteth thee; he seeketh to win thy favour and prayed me to admit him as a guest in our dwelling, so thou mayst let him hear somewhat of thy singing." When she heard speak of the young Damascene, she gave a sob, that her soul was like to leave her body, and answered, "He knoweth my plight and how these three days past I have not eaten nor drunken, and I beseech thee, O my lord, by Allah of All-Might, to do thy duty by the stranger, and bring him to my lodging and make excuse to him for me." When her master heard this, his reason fled for joy, and he went to his familiar the draper and said to him, "Thou wast right in the matter of the damsel, for that she is in love with the young Damascene; so how shall I manage?" Said the other, "Go to the bazar and when thou seest him, salute him, and say to him:—Thy departure the other day, without winning thy wish, was grievous to me; so, an thou be still minded to buy the maid, I will abate thee of that which thou badest for her an hundred sequins by way of gaining thy favour; seeing thou be a stranger

in our land. If he say to thee:—I have no desire for her and hold off from thee, be assured that he will not buy; in which case, let me know, so I may devise thee another device; and if he say to thee other than this, conceal not from me aught." So the girl's owner betook himself to the bazar, where he found the youth seated at the upper end of the place where the merchants mostly do meet, selling and buying and taking and giving, as he were the moon on the night of its full, and saluted him. The young man returned his salam and he said to him, "O my lord, be not offended at the damsel's speech the other day, for her price shall be lowered to the intent that I may secure thy favour. An thou desire her for naught, I will send her to thee, or an thou wouldst have me abate to thee her price, I will well, for I desire nothing save what shall content thee; seeing thou art a stranger in our land, and it behoveth us to treat thee hospitably and have consideration for thee." The youth replied, "By Allah, I will not take her from thee but at an advance on that which I bade thee for her afore; so wilt thou now sell her to me for one thousand and seven hundred dinars?" And the other rejoined, "O my lord, I sell her to thee, may Allah bless thee in her!" Thereupon the young man went to his quarters and fetching a purse, sent for the girl's owner and weighed out to him the price aforesaid, whilst the draper was between the twain. Then said he, "Bring her forth"; but the other replied, "She cannot come forth at this present; but be thou my guest the rest of this day and night, and on the morrow thou shalt take thy slave-girl and go in the ward of Allah." The youth agreed with him on this and he carried him to his house, where, after a little, he bade meat and wine be brought, and they ate and drank. Then said Nur al-Din to the girl's owner, "I would have thee bring me the damsel, because I bought her not but for the like of this time." So he arose and going in to the girl, said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, the young man hath paid down thy price and we have bidden him hither; so he hath come to our quarters and we have entertained him, and he would fain have thee be present with him." There with the damsel rose deftly and doffing her dress, bathed and donned sumptuous apparel and perfumed herself and went out to him, as she were a branch of Ban or a cane of rattan, followed by a black slave-girl, bearing the lute. When she came to the young man, she saluted him and sat down by his side. Then she took the lute from the slave-girl and screwing up its pegs,[1] smote

1 Arab. "Ázán-hú," lit =its ears.

thereon in four-and-twenty modes, after which she returned to the first and sang these couplets:—

My joy in this world is to see and sit near thee * Thy love's my religion; thy Union my pleasure.
Attest it these tears when in memory I speer thee, * And unchecked down my cheeks pours the flood without measure.
By Allah, no rival in love hast to fear thee; * I'm thy slave as I sware, and this troth is my treasure.
Be not this our last meeting: by Allah I swear thee * Thy severance to me were most bitter displeasure!

The young man was moved to delight and cried, "By Allah, thou sayest well, O Sitt al-Milah! Let me hear more." Then he largessed her with fifty gold pieces and they drank, and the cups made circuit among them; and her seller said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, this is the season of farewelling; so let us hear somewhat thereon." Accordingly she struck the lute and, touching upon that which was in her heart, improvised these couplets:—

I thole longing, remembrance and sad repine, * Nor my heart can brook woes in so lengthened line.
O my lords think not I forget your love; * My case is sure case and cure shows no sign.
If creature could swim in the flood of his tears, * I were first to swim in these floods of brine:
O Cup-boy withhold cup and bowl from a wretch * Who ne'er ceaseth to drink of her tears for wine!
Had I known that parting would do me die, * I had shirked to part, but—'twas Fate's design.

Now whilst they were thus enjoying whatso is most delicious of ease and delight, and indeed the wine was to them sweet and the talk a treat, behold, there came a knocking at the door. So the house-master went out, that he might see what might be the matter, and found ten head of the Caliph's eunuchs at the entrance. When he saw this, he was startled and said, "What is to do?" "The Commander of the Faithful saluteth thee and requireth of thee the slave-girl whom thou hast exposed for sale and whose name is Sitt al-Milah." "By Allah, I have sold her." "Swear by the head of the Commander of the Faithful that she is not in thy quarters." The slaver made oath that he had sold her, and that she was no longer at his disposal: yet they paid no heed to his word, and forcing their way into the house, found the damsel and the young Damascene in the sitting-chamber. So they laid hands upon her, and the youth said, "This is my

slave-girl, whom I have bought with my money"; but they hearkened not to his speech, and taking her carried her off to the Prince of True Believers. Therewith Nur al-Din's pleasure was troubled: he arose and donned his dress, and his host said, "Whither away this night, O my lord?" Said he, "I purpose going to my quarters, and to-morrow I will betake myself to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and demand my slave-girl." The other replied, "Sleep till the morning, and fare not forth at the like of this hour." But he rejoined, "Needs must I go"; and the host said to him, "Go in Allah his safeguard." So the youth went forth and, drunkenness having got the mastery of his wits, he threw himself down on a bench before one of the shops. Now the watchmen were at that hour making their rounds and they smelt the sweet scent of essences and wine that reeked from him; so they made for it, and suddenly beheld the youth lying on the bench, without sign of recovering. They poured water upon him, and he awoke, whereupon they carried him to the office of the Chief of Police, and he questioned him of his case. He replied, "O my lord, I am an alien in this town and have been with one of my friends: I came forth from his house and drunkenness overcame me." The Wali bade carry him to his lodging; but one of those in attendance upon him, Al-Murádi hight, said to him, "What wilt thou do? This man is robed in rich raiment and on his finger is a golden ring, whose bezel is a ruby of great price; so we will carry him away and slay him, and take that which is upon him of clothes and bring to thee all we get; for that thou wilt not often see profit the like thereof, especially as this fellow is a foreigner and there is none to ask after him.[1]" Quoth the Chief, "This wight is a thief, and that which he saith is leasing." Nur al-Din said, "Allah forfend that I should be a thief!" but the Wali answered, "Thou liest." So they stripped him of his clothes and, taking the seal-ring from his finger, beat him with a grievous beating, what while he cried out for succour, but none succoured him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then said he to them, "O folk, ye are quit[2] of that which ye have taken from me; but now restore me to my lodging." They replied, "Leave this knavery, O rascal! thine intent is to sue us for thy clothes on the morrow." The youth cried, "By the truth of the One, the Eternal One, I will not sue

1 Here again the policeman is made a villain of the deepest dye; bad enough to gratify the intelligence of his deadliest enemy, a lodging-keeper in London.

2 *i.e.*, you are welcome to it and so it becomes lawful (*halál*) to you.

any for them!" but they said, "We find no way to this." And the Prefect bade them bear him to the Tigris and there slay him and cast him into the stream. So they dragged him away, while he wept and said the words which shall nowise shame the sayer: "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" When they came to the Tigris, one of them drew the sword upon him, and Al-Muradi said to the sworder, "Smite off his head"; but one of them, hight Ahmad, cried, "O folk, deal softly with this poor wretch and slay him not unjustly and wickedly, for I stand in fear of Allah Almighty, lest He burn me with His fire." Quoth Al-Muradi, "A truce to this talk!" and quoth the Ahmad aforesaid, "An ye do with him aught, I will acquaint the Commander of the Faithful." They asked, "How, then, shall we do with him?" and he answered, "Let us deposit him in prison and I will be answerable to you for his provision; so shall we be quit of his blood, for indeed he is a wronged man." Accordingly they agreed to this, and taking him up cast him into the Prison of Blood,[1] and then went their ways. So far as regards them; but returning to the damsel, they carried her to the Commander of the Faithful and she pleased him; so he assigned her a chamber of the chambers of choice. She tarried in the palace, neither eating nor drinking and weeping sans surcease night and day, till, one night, the Caliph sent for her to his sitting-hall and said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear, for I will make thy rank higher than any of the concubines, and thou shalt see that which shall rejoice thee." She kissed ground and wept; whereupon the Prince of True Believers called for her lute and bade her sing: so in accordance with that which was in her heart, she sang these improvised couplets:—

By the sheen of thy soul and the sheen of thy smile,[2] * Say, moan'st thou for doubt or is't ring-dove's moan?
How many have died who by love were slain! * Fails my patience but blaming my blamers wone.

Now when she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept till she fainted away, whereupon the Caliph bade carry her to her chamber. But he was fascinated by her and loved her with exceeding love; so, after a while, he again commanded to bring her in to the presence, and when she

1 Arab. "Sijn al-Dam," the Carcere duro inasprito (to speak Triestine), where men convicted or even accused of bloodshed were confined.

2 Arab. "Mabásim"; plur. of Mabsim, a smiling mouth which shows the foreteeth.

came, he ordered her sing. Accordingly, she took the lute and chanted to it that which was in her heart and improvised these couplets:—

Have I patience and strength to support this despair? * Ah, how couldst thou purpose afar to fare?
Thou art swayed by the spy to my cark and care: * No marvel an branchlet sway here and there[1]!
With unbearable load thou wouldst load me, still * Thou loadest with love which I theewards bear.

Then she cast the lute from her hand and fainted away; so she was carried to her sleeping-chamber and, indeed, passion grew upon her. After a long while, the Prince of True Believers sent for her a third time and commanded her to sing. So she took the lute and chanted these couplets:—

O of piebald wild ye dunes sandy and drear, * Shall the teenful lover 'scape teen and tear?
Shall ye see me joined with a lover, who * Still flies or shall meet we in joyful cheer?
O hail to the fawn with the Houri eye, * Like sun or moon on horizon clear!
He saith to lovers, "What look ye on?" * And to stony hearts, "Say, what love ye dear[2]?"
I pray to Him who departed us * With severance-doom, "Be our union near!"

When she had made an end of her verse, the Commander of the Faithful said to her, "O damsel, thou art in love." She replied, "Yes"; and he asked, "With whom?" Answered she, "With my lord and sovran of my tenderness, for whom my love is as the love of the earth for rain, or as the desire of the female for the male; and indeed the love of him is mingled with my flesh and my blood, and hath entered into the channels of my bones. O Prince of true Believers, whenever I call him to mind my vitals are consumed, for that I have not yet won my wish of him, and but that I fear to die, without seeing him, I had assuredly slain myself." Thereupon quoth he, "Art thou in my presence, and durst bespeak me with the like of these words? Forsure I will gar thee forget thy lord." Then he bade take her away; so she was carried to her pavilion and he sent her a concubine with a casket wherein were three thousand ducats and a collar of gold set with seed-pearls and great unions, and jewels, worth other three thousand, saying to her, "The slave-girl and that which is

1 The branchlet, as usual, is the youth's slender form.
2 *Subaudi*, "An ye disdain my love."

with her are a gift from me to thee." When she heard this, she cried, "Allah forfend that I be consoled for the love of my lord and my master, though with an earth-full of gold!" And she improvised and recited these couplets :—

By his life I swear, by his life I pray; * For him fire I'd enter unful dismay!
"Console thee (cry they) with another fere * Thou lovest!" and I, "By 's life, nay, NAY!"
He 's moon whom beauty and grace array; * From whose cheeks and brow shineth light of day.

Then the Commander of the Faithful summoned her to his presence a fourth time and said, "O Sitt al-Milah, sing." So she recited and sang these couplets :—

The lover's heart by his beloved is oft disheartenèd * And by the hand of sickness eke his sprite dispiritèd,
One asked, "What is the taste of love[1]?" and I to him replied, * "Love is a sweet at first but oft in fine unsweetenèd."
I am the thrall of Love who keeps the troth of love to them[2] * But oft they proved themselves 'Urkúb[3] in pact with me they made.
What in their camp remains? They bound their loads and fared away; * To other feres the veilèd Fairs in curtained litters sped;
At every station the beloved showed all of Joseph's charms: * The lover wonèd with Jacob's woe in every shift of stead.

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept herself a-swoon. So they sprinkled on her musk-mingled rose-water and willow-flower water; and when she came to her senses, Al-Rashid said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, this is not just dealing in thee. We love thee and thou lovest another." She replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, there is no help for it." Thereupon he was wroth with her and cried, "By the virtue of Hamzah[4] and 'Akíl[5] and Mohammed, Prince of the Apostles, an thou name in my presence one other than I, I will assuredly order strike off thy head!" Then he bade return her to her chamber, whilst she wept and recited these couplets :—

"Oh brave!" I'd cry an I my death could view; * My death were better than these griefs to rue,
Did sabre hew me limb by limb; this were * Naught to affright a lover leal-true.

1 In the text "sleep"
2 "Them" and "him" for "her."
3 'Urkúb, a Jew of Yathrib or Khaybar, immortalised in the A.P. (i 454) as "more promise-breaking than 'Urkúb"
4 Uncle of Mohammed. See vol. vi. night dcccxli
5 First cousin of Mohammed. See ib.

Then the Caliph went in to the Lady Zubaydah, complexion-altered with anger, and she noted this in him and said to him, "How cometh it that I see the Commander of the Faithful changed of colour?" He replied, "O daughter of my uncle, I have a beautiful slave-girl, who reciteth verses by rote and telleth various tales, and she hath taken my whole heart; but she loveth other than myself, and declareth that she affecteth her former lord; so I have sworn a great oath that, if she come again to my sitting-hall and sing for other than for me, I will assuredly shorten her highest part by a span." Quoth Zubaydah, "Let the Commander of the Faithful favour me by presenting her, so I may look on her and hear her singing." Accordingly he bade fetch her and she came, upon which the Lady Zubaydah withdrew behind the curtain,[1] where the damsel saw her not, and Al-Rashid said to her, "Sing to us." So she took the lute and tuning it, recited these couplets:—

O my lord! since the day when I lost your sight, * My life was ungladdened, my heart full of teen;
The memory of you kills me every night; * And by all the worlds is my trace unseen;
All for love of a Fawn who hath snared my sprite * By his love and his brow as the morning sheen.
Like a left hand parted from brother right * I became by parting thro' Fortune's spleen.
On the brow of him Beauty deigned indite * "Blest be Allah, whom best of Creators I ween!"
And Him I pray, who could disunite * To re-unite us. Then cry "Ameen[2]!"

When Al-Rashid heard the end of this, he waxed exceeding wroth and said, "May Allah not reunite you twain in gladness!" Then he summoned the headsman, and when he presented himself, he said to him, "Strike off the head of this accursed slave-girl." So Masrur took her by the hand and led her away; but, when she came to the door, she turned and said to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, I conjure thee, by thy fathers and forefathers, behead me not until thou give ear to that I shall say!" Then she improvised and recited these couplets:—

Emir of Justice, be to lieges kind * For Justice ever guides thy generous mind;

1 Arab. "Al-Bashkhánah."
2 *i.e.*, Amen. See vol. vii. night dcccxxix.

And, oh, who blamest love to him inclining! * Are lovers blamed for lâches undesigned?
By Him who gave thee rule, deign spare my life * For rule on earth He hath to thee assigned.

Then Masrur carried her to the other end of the sitting-hall and bound her eyes, and making her sit stood awaiting a second order; whereupon quoth the Lady Zubaydah, "O Prince of True Believers, with thy permission, wilt thou not vouchsafe this damsel a portion of thy clemency? An thou slay her, 'twere injustice." Quoth he, "What is to be done with her?" and quoth she, "Forbear to slay her and send for her lord. If he be as she describeth him in beauty and loveliness, she is excused, and if he be not on this wise then kill her, and this shall be thy plea against her.[1]" Al-Rashid replied, "No harm in this rede"; and caused return the damsel to her chamber, saying to her, "The Lady Zubaydah saith thus and thus." She rejoined, "God requite her for me with good! Indeed, thou dealest equitably, O Commander of the Faithful, in this judgment." And he retorted, "Go now to thy place, and to-morrow we will bid them bring thy lord." So she kissed ground and recited these couplets:—

I indeed will well for whom love I will: * Let chider chide and let blamer blame:
All lives must die at fixt tide and term * But I must die ere my life-term came:
Then oh whose love hath afflicted me * We I will but thy presence in 'haste I claim.

Then she arose and returned to her chamber. Now on the morrow, the Commander of the Faithful sat in his hall of audience, and his Wazir Ja'afar bin Yahya the Barmecide came in to him; whereupon he called to him, saying, "I would have thee bring me a youth who is lately come to Baghdad, hight Sidi Nur al-Din Ali the Damascene." Quoth Ja'afar, "Hearing and obeying," and going forth in quest of the youth, sent to the bazars and Wakalahs and Khans for three successive days, but discovered no trace of him, neither happened upon the place of him. So on the fourth day he presented himself before the Caliph and said to him, "O our lord, I have sought him these three days, but have not found him." Said Al-Rashid, "Make ready letters to Damascus. Peradventure he hath returned to his own land." Accordingly Ja'afar wrote a letter and despatched

1 When asked, on Doomsday, his justification for having slain her.

it by a dromedary-courier to the Damascus-city; and they sought him there and found him not. Meanwhile, news was brought that Khorasan had been conquered[1]; whereupon Al-Rashid rejoiced and bade decorate Baghdad and release all in the gaol, giving each of them a ducat and a dress. So Ja'afar applied himself to the adornment of the city, and bade his brother Al-Fazl ride to the prison, and robe and set free the prisoners. Al-Fazl did as his brother commanded, and released all save the young Damascene, who abode still in the prison of blood, saying, "There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, we are God's and to Him are we returning." Then quoth Al-Fazl to the gaoler, "Is there any left in the prison?" Quoth he, "No," and Al-Fazl was about to depart, when Nur al-Din called out to him from within the prison, saying, "O our lord, tarry awhile, for there remaineth none in the prison other than I, and indeed I am wronged. This is a day of pardon, and there is no disputing concerning it" Al-Fazl bade release him; so they set him free and he gave him a dress and a ducat. Thereupon the young man went out, bewildered and unknowing whither he should wend, for that he had sojourned in the gaol a year or so, and indeed his condition was changed and his favour fouled, and he abode walking and turning round, lest Al-Muradi come upon him and cast him into another calamity. When Al-Muradi learnt his release, he betook himself to the Wali and said, "O our lord, we are not assured of our lives from that youth, because he hath been freed from prison and we fear lest he complain of us." Quoth the Chief, "How shall we do?" and quoth Al-Muradi, "I will cast him into a calamity for thee." Then he ceased not to follow the Damascene from place to place, till he came up with him in a narrow stead and *cul-de-sac;* whereupon he accosted him and casting a cord about his neck, cried out, "A thief!" The folk flocked to him from all sides and fell to beating and abusing Nur al-Din,[2] whilst he cried out for aidance but none aided him, and Al-Muradi kept saying to him, "But yesterday the Commander of the Faithful released thee and to-day thou robbest!" So the hearts of the mob were hardened against him and again Al-Muradi carried him to the Chief of

1 Khorasan, which included our Afghanistan, turbulent then as now, was in a chronic state of rebellion during the latter part of Al-Rashid's reign.

2 The brutality of a Moslem mob on such occasions is phenomenal: no fellow-feeling makes them decently kind. And so at executions even women will take an active part in insulting and tormenting the criminal, tearing his hair, spitting in his face, and so forth. It is the instinctive brutality with which wild beasts and birds tear to pieces a wounded companion.

Police, who bade hew off his hand. Accordingly, the hangman took him and bringing out the knife, proceeded to cut off his hand, while Al-Muradi said to him, "Cut and sever the bone and fry[1] not in oil the stump for him, so he may lose all his blood and we be at rest from him." But Ahmad, he who had before been the cause of his deliverance, sprang up to him and cried, "O folk, fear Allah in your action with this youth, for that I know his affair, first and last, and he is clear of offence and guiltless: he is of the lords of houses,[2] and unless ye desist from him, I will go up to the Commander of the Faithful and acquaint him with the case from beginning to end, and that the youth is innocent of sin or crime." Quoth Al-Muradi, "Indeed, we are not assured from his mischief"; and quoth Ahmad, "Set him free and commit him to me and I will warrant you against his doings, for ye shall never see him again after this." So they delivered Nur al-Din to him and he took him from their hands and said to him, "O youth, have ruth on thyself, for indeed thou hast fallen into the hands of these folk twice, and if they prevail over thee a third time they will make an end of thee; and I in doing thus with thee, aim at reward for thee and recompense in Heaven and answer of prayer.[3]" So Nur al-Din fell to kissing his hand and blessing him said, "Know that I am a stranger in this your city, and the completion of kindness is better than its commencement; wherefore I pray thee of thy favour that thou make perfect to me thy good offices and generosity, and bring me to the city-gate. So will thy beneficence be accomplished unto me, and may God Almighty requite thee for me with good!" Ahmad replied, "No harm shall betide thee: go; I will bear thee company till thou come to thy place of safety." And he left him not till he brought him to the city-gate, and said to him, "O youth, go in Allah's guard and return not to the city; for, an they fall in with thee again, they will make an end of thee." Nur al-Din kissed his hand and going forth the city, gave not over walking till he came to a mosque that stood in one of the suburbs of Baghdad and entered therein with the night. Now he had with him naught wherewith he might cover himself; so he wrapped himself up in one of the mats of the mosque and thus abode till dawn, when the Muezzins came and finding him seated in such case, said to him, "O youth,

1 The popular way of stopping hæmorrhage by plunging the stump into burning oil, which continued even in Europe till Ambrose Paré taught men to take up the arteries.

2 *i.e.*, folk of good family.

3 *i.e.*, the result of thy fervent prayers to Allah for me.

what is this plight?" Said he, "I cast myself on your protection, imploring your defence from a company of folk who seek to slay me unjustly and wrongously, without cause." And one of the Muezzins said, "I will protect thee; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear." Then he brought him old clothes and covered him therewith; he also set before him somewhat of victual and seeing upon him signs of fine breeding, said to him, "O my son, I grow old and desiring help from thee, I will do away thy necessity." Nur al-Din replied, "To hear is to obey"; and abode with the old man, who rested and took his ease, while the youth did his service in the mosque, celebrating the praises of Allah, and calling the Faithful to prayer and lighting the lamps and filling the spout-pots[1] and sweeping and cleaning out the place of worship. On this wise it befell the young Damascene; but as regards Sitt al-Milah, the Lady Zubaydah, the wife of the Commander of the Faithful, made a banquet in her palace and assembled her slave-girls. And the damsel came, weeping-eyed and heavy-hearted, and those present blamed her for this, whereupon she recited these couplets:—

Ye blame the mourner who weeps his woe; * Needs must the mourner sing, weeping sore;
An I see not some happy day I'll weep * Brine-tears till followed by gouts of gore.

When she had made an end of her verses, the Lady Zubaydah bade each damsel sing a song, till the turn came round to Sitt al-Milah, whereupon she took the lute, and tuning it carolled thereto four-and-twenty carols in four-and-twenty modes; then she returned to the first and sang these couplets:—

The World hath shot me with all her shafts * Departing friends parting-grief t' aby:
So in heart the burn of all hearts I bear * And in eyes the tear-drops of every eye.

When she had made an end of her song, she wept till she garred the bystanders weep, and the Lady Zubaydah condoled with her and said to her, "Allah upon thee, O Sitt al-Milah, sing us somewhat, so we may hearken to thee." The damsel replied, "Hearing and obeying," and sang these couplets:—

People of passion, assemble ye! * This day be the day of our agony:
The Raven of severance croaks at our doors; * Our raven which nigh to us aye see we.

1 Arab. "Al-Abárik," plur. of Ibrik, an ewer containing water for the Wuzu-ablution. I have already explained that a Moslem wishing to be ceremonially pure, cannot wash as Europeans do, in a basin whose contents are fouled by the first touch.

The friends we love have appointed us * The grievousest parting-dule to dree.
Rise, by your lives, and let all at once * Fare to seek our friends where their sight we see.

Then she threw the lute from her hand and shed tears till she drew tears from the Lady Zubaydah, who said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, he whom thou lovest methinks is not in this world, for the Commander of the Faithful hath sought him in every place, but hath not found him." Whereupon the damsel arose, and kissing the Princess's hands said to her, "O my lady, an thou wouldst have him found, I have this night a request to make whereby thou mayst win my need with the Caliph." Quoth the Lady, "And what is it?" and quoth Sitt al-Milah, "'Tis that thou get me leave to fare forth by myself and go round about in quest of him three days, for the adage saith, Whoso keeneth for herself is not like whoso is hired to keen[1]! An if I find him, I will bring him before the Commander of the Faithful, so he may do with us what he will, and if I find him not, I shall be cut off from hope of him and the heat of that which is with me will be cooled." Quoth the Lady Zubaydah, "I will not get thee leave from him but for a whole month; so be of good cheer and eyes cool and clear." Whereat Sitt al-Milah rejoiced and rising, kissed ground before her once more and went away to her own place, and right glad was she. As for Zubaydah, she went in to the Caliph and talked with him awhile; then she fell to kissing him between the eyes and on his hand, and asked him for that which she had promised to Sitt al-Milah, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, I doubt me her lord is not found in this world: but, an she go about seeking him and find him not, her hopes will be cut off and her mind will be set at rest and she will sport and laugh; and, indeed, while she nourisheth hope, she will never take the right direction." And she ceased not cajoling him till he gave Sitt al-Milah leave to fare forth and make search for her lord a month's space, and ordered her a riding-mule and an eunuch to attend her, and bade the privy purse give her all she needed, were it a thousand dirhams a day or even more. So the Lady Zubaydah arose and returning to her palace bade summon Sitt al-Milah and, as soon as she came, acquainted her with that which had passed; whereupon she kissed her hand and thanked her and called down blessings on her. Then she took

1 Arab. "Náihah," the præfica or myriologist. See vol. i night xxx. The proverb means, "If you want a thing done, do it yourself."

leave of the Princess and veiling her face with a mask,[1] disguised herself[2]; after which she mounted the she-mule, and sallying forth went round about seeking her lord in the highways of Baghdad three days' space, but happened on no tidings of him; and on the fourth day she rode forth without the city. Now it was the noon-hour and fierce was the heat, and she was aweary, and thirst came upon her. Presently she reached the mosque of the Shaykh who had lodged the young Damascene, and dismounting at the door, said to the old Muezzin, "O Shaykh, hast thou a draught of cold water? Verily, I am overcome with heat and thirst." Said he, "'Tis with me in my house." So he carried her up into his lodging and, spreading her a carpet, seated her; after which he brought her cold water and she drank and said to the eunuch, "Go thy ways with the mule and to-morrow come back to me here." Accordingly he went away and she slept and rested herself. When she awoke, she asked the old man, "O Shaykh, hast thou aught of food?" and he answered, "O my lady, I have bread and olives." Quoth she, "That be food which befitteth only the like of thee. As for me, I will have naught save roast lamb, and soups, and reddened fowls right fat, and ducks farcis with all manner stuffing of pistachio nuts and sugar." Quoth the Muezzin, "O my lady, I have never heard of this chapter[3] in the Koran, nor was it revealed to our lord Mohammed, whom Allah save and assain[4]!" She laughed and said, "O Shaykh, the matter is even as thou sayest; but bring me pen-case and paper." So he brought her what she sought, and she wrote a note and gave it to him, together with a seal-ring from her finger, saying, "Go into the city and enquire for Such-an-one the Shroff, and give him this my note." Accordingly the oldster betook himself to the city, as she bade him, and asked for the money-changer, to whom they directed him, So he gave him ring and writ, seeing which, he kissed the letter, and breaking it

1 Arab. "Burka'," the face veil of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia with two holes for the eyes, and the end hanging to the waist, a great contrast with the "Lithâm," or coquettish fold of transparent muslin affected by modest women in Stambul.

2 *i.e.*, donned petticoat-trousers and walking boots other than those she was wont to wear.

3 "Surah" (Koranic chapter) may be a clerical error for "Súrah" (with a Sád) = sort, fashion (of food).

4 This is solemn religious chaff; the Shaykh had doubtless often dipped his hand abroad in such dishes; but like a good Moslem, he contented himself at home with wheaten scones and olives, a kind of sacramental food, like bread and wine in southern Europe. But his retort would be acceptable to the True Believer who, the strictest of conservatives, prides himself on imitating in all points the sayings and doings of the Apostle.

open, read it and apprehended its contents. Then he repaired to the bazar, and buying all that she bade him, laid it in a porter's crate and made him go with the Shaykh. The old man took the Hammál and went with him to the mosque, where he relieved him of his burden and carried the rich viands in to Sitt al-Milah. She seated him by her side and they ate, he and she, of those dainty cates, till they were satisfied, when the Shaykh rose and removed the food from before her. She passed that night in his lodging, and when she got up in the morning she said to him, "O elder, may I not lack thy kind offices for the breakfast! Go to the Shroff and fetch me from him the like of yesterday's food." So he arose and betaking himself to the money-changer, acquainted him with that which she had bidden him. The Shro brought him all she required and set it on the heads of Hammals; and the Shaykh took them and returned with them to the damsel, when she sat down with him and they ate their sufficiency, after which he removed the rest of the meats. Then she took the fruits and the flowers and setting them over against herself, wrought them into rings and knots and writs, whilst the Shaykh looked on at a thing whose like he had never in his life seen, and rejoiced in the sight. Presently said she to him, "O elder, I would fain drink." So he arose and brought her a gugglet of water, but she cried to him, "Who said to thee, Fetch that?" Quoth he, "Saidst thou not to me, I would fain drink?" and quoth she, "I want not this; nay, I want wine, the solace of the soul, so haply, O Shaykh, I may refresh myself therewith." Exclaimed the old man, "Allah forfend that strong drink be drunk in my house, and I a stranger in the land and a Muezzin and an Imam, who leadeth the True Believers in prayer, and a servant of the House of the Lord of the three Worlds!" "Why wilt thou forbid me to drink thereof in thy house?" "Because 'tis unlawful." "O elder, Allah hath forbidden only the eating of blood and carrion[1] and hog's flesh: tell me, are grapes and honey lawful or unlawful?" "They are lawful." "This is the juice of grapes and the water of honey." "Leave this thy talk, for thou shalt never drink wine in my house." "O Shaykh, people eat and drink and enjoy themselves, and we are of the number of the folk, and Allah is indulgent and merciful.[2]"

1 *i.e.*, animals that died without being ceremonially killed.

2 Koran ii. 168. This is from the Chapter of the Cow, where "that which dieth of itself (carrion), blood, pork, and that over which other name but that of Allah (*i.e.*, idols) hath been invoked" are forbidden. But the verset humanely concludes: "Whoso, however, shall eat them by constraint, without desire, or as a transgressor, then no sin shall be upon him."

"This is a thing that may not be." "Hast thou not heard what the poet saith?" And she recited these couplets:—

Cease thou to hear, O Sim'án-son,[1] aught save the say of me; * How bitter 'twas to quit the monks and fly the monast'ry!
When, on the Fête of Palms there stood, amid the hallowed fane,[2]* A pretty Fawn whose lovely pride garred me sore wrong to dree.
May Allah bless the night we spent when he to us was third, * While Moslem, Jew, and Nazarene all sported fain and free.
Quoth he, from out whose locks appeared the gleaming of the morn,* "Sweet is the wine and sweet the flowers that joy us comrades three.
The garden of the garths of Khuld where roll and rail amain,* Rivulets 'neath the myrtle shade and Bán's fair branchery;
And birds make carol on the boughs and sing in blithest lay, * Yea, this indeed is life, but, ah! how soon it fades away."

She then asked him, "O Shaykh, an Moslems and Jews and Nazarenes drink wine, who are we that we should reject it?" Answered he, "By Allah, O my lady, spare thy pains, for this be a thing whereto I will not hearken." When she knew that he would not consent to her desire, she said to him, "O Shaykh, I am of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful, and the food waxeth heavy on me, and if I drink not I shall die of indigestion, nor wilt thou be assured against the issue of my case.[3] As for me, I acquit myself of blame towards thee, for that I have bidden thee beware of the wrath of the Commander of the Faithful, after making myself known to thee." When the Shaykh heard her words, and that wherewith she threatened him, he sprang up and went out, perplexed and unknowing what he should do, and there met him a Jewish man, which was his neighbour, and said to him, "How cometh it that I see thee, O Shaykh, strait of breast? Eke, I hear in thy house a noise of talk, such as I am unwont to hear with thee." Quoth the Muezzin, "'Tis of a damsel who declareth that she is of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid; and she hath eaten meat and now would drink wine in my house, but I forbade her. However, she asserteth that unless she drink thereof, she will die, and indeed I am bewildered concerning my case." Answered the Jew, "Know, O my neighbour, that the slave-girls

1 *i.e.*, son of Simeon = a Christian.

2 Arab. and Heb. "Haykal," suggesting the idea of large space, a temple, a sanctuary, a palace, which bear a suspicious likeness to the Accadian Ê-kal, or great house = the old Egyptian Perao (Pharaoh?), and the Japanese "Mikado."

3 Wine, carrion and pork being lawful to the Moslem if used to save life.

of the Commander of the Faithful are used to drink wine, and when they eat and drink not, they die; and I fear lest happen some mishap to her, when thou wouldst not be safe from the Caliph's fury." The Shaykh asked, "What is to be done?" and the Jew answered, "I have old wine that will suit her." Quoth the Shaykh, "By the right of neighbourship, deliver me from this descent[1] of calamity, and let me have that which is with thee!" Quoth the Jew, "Bismillah, in the name of Allah," and passing to his quarters, brought out a glass flask of wine, wherewith the Shaykh returned to Sitt al-Milah. This pleased her and she cried to him, "Whence hadst thou this?" He replied, "I got it from the Jew, my neighbour: I set forth to him my case with thee and he gave me this." Thereupon Sitt al-Milah filled a cup and emptied it; after which she drank a second and a third. Then she crowned the cup a fourth time and handed it to the Shaykh, but he would not accept it from her. However, she conjured him, by her own head and that of the Prince of True Believers, that he take the cup from her, till he received it from her hand and kissed it, and would have set it down; but she sware him by her life to smell it. Accordingly he smelt it, and she said to him, "How deemest thou?" Said he, "I find its smell is sweet"; and she conjured him by the Caliph's life to taste thereof. So he put it to his mouth, and she rose to him and made him drink; whereupon quoth he, "O Princess of the Fair,[2] this is none other than good." Quoth she, "So deem I: hath not our Lord promised us wine in Paradise?" He answered, "Yes! the Most High saith:—And rivers of wine, delicious to the drinkers.[3] And we will drink it in this world and in the next world." She laughed and, emptying the cup, gave him to drink, and he said, "O Princess of the Fair, indeed thou art excusable in thy love for this." Then he bent in hand from her another and another, till he became drunken, and his talk waxed great and his prattle. The folk of the quarter heard him and assembled under the window; and when the Shaykh was ware of them, he opened the window and said to them, "Are ye not ashamed, O pimps? Every one in his own house doth whatso he willeth and none hindereth him; but we drink one single day, and ye assemble and come, panders

1 Arab. "Názilah," *i.e.*, a curse coming down from Heaven.

2 Here and below a translation of her name.

3 "A picture of Paradise which is promised to the God-fearing! Therein are rivers of water which taint not, and rivers of milk whose taste changeth not; and rivers of wine," etc.—Koran xlvii. 16.

that ye are! To-day, wine, and to-morrow business[1]; and from hour to hour cometh relief." So they laughed together and dispersed. Then the girl drank till she was drunken, when she called to mind her lord and wept, and the Shaykh said to her, "What maketh thee weep, O my lady?" Said she, "O elder, I am a lover and a separated." He cried, "O my lady, what is this love?" Cried she, "And thou, hast thou never been in love?" He replied, "By Allah, O my lady, never in all my life heard I of this thing, nor have I ever known it! Is it of the sons of Adam or of the Jinn?" She laughed and said, "Verily, thou art even as those of whom the poet speaketh in these couplets:—

How oft shall they admonish and ye shun this nourishment; * When e'en the shepherd's bidding is obeyèd by his flocks?
I see you like in shape and form to creatures whom we term * Mankind, but in your acts and deeds you are a sort of ox.[2]

The Shaykh laughed at her speech and her verses pleased him. Then cried she to him, "I desire of thee a lute." So he arose and brought her a bit of fuel.[3] Quoth she, "What is that?" and quoth he, "Didst thou not say: Bring me fuel?" Said she, "I do not want this," and said he, "What then is it that is hight fuel, other than this?" She laughed and replied, "The lute is an instrument of music, whereunto I sing." Asked he, "Where is this thing found, and of whom shall I get it for thee?" and answered she, "Of him who gave thee the wine." So he arose and betaking himself to his neighbour the Jew, said to him, "Thou favouredst us before with the wine, so now complete thy favours and look me out a thing hight lute, which be an instrument for singing; for she seeketh this of me and I know it not." Replied the Jew, "Hearkening and obedience," and, going into his house, brought him a lute. The old man carried it to Sitt al-Milah, whilst the Jew took his drink and sat by a window adjoining the Shaykh's house, so he might hear the singing. The damsel rejoiced when the old man returned to her with the lute, and, taking it from him, tuned its strings and sang these couplets:—

1 Let us have wine and women, mirth and laughter,
Sermons and soda-water the day after.
Don Juan, ii. 178.

2 The ox (Bakar) and the bull (Taur, vol. i. p. 14) are the Moslem emblems of stupidity, as with us are the highly intelligent ass and the most sagacious goose.

3 In Arab. "'Ud" means primarily wood; then a lute See vol. ii. night xlix. The Muezzin, like the schoolmaster, is popularly supposed to be a fool

Remains not, after you are gone, or trace of you or sign, * But hope to see this parting end and break its lengthy line:
You went and by your wending made the whole world desolate; * And none may stand this day in stead to fill the yearning eyne.
Indeed, you've burdened weakling me, by strength and force of you * With load no hill hath power t'upheave nor yet the plain low li'en:
And I, whenever fain I scent the breeze your land o'erbreathes, * Lose all my wits as though they were bemused with heady wine.
O folk no light affair is Love for lover woe to dree * Nor easy 'tis to satisfy its sorrow and repine.
I've wandered East and West to hap upon your trace, and when * Spring-camps I find the dwellers cry, "They've marched, those friends o' thine!"
Never accustomed me to part these intimates I love; * Nay, when I left them all were wont new meetings to design.

Now when she had ended her song, she wept with sore weeping, till presently sleep overcame her, and she slept. On the morrow she said to the Shaykh, "Get thee to the Shroff and fetch me the ordinary"; so he repaired to the money-changer and delivered him the message, whereupon he made ready meat and drink, according to his custom, with which the old man returned to the damsel, and they ate their sufficiency. When she had eaten, she sought of him wine, and he went to the Jew and fetched it. Then the twain sat down and drank; and, when she waxed drunken, she took the lute and, smiting it, fell a-singing and chanted these couplets:—

How long ask I the heart, the heart drowned, and eke * Refrain my complaint while my tear-floods speak?
They forbid e'en the phantom to visit me, * (O marvel!) her phantom my couch to seek.[1]

And, when she had made an end of her song, she wept with sore weeping. All this time the young Damascene was listening, and now he likened her voice to the voice of his slave-girl, and then he put away from him this thought, and the damsel had no knowledge whatever of his presence. Then she broke out again into song and chanted these couplets:—

Quoth they, "Forget him! What is he?" To them I cried, * "Allah forget me when forget I mine adored!"
Now in this world shall I forget the love o' you? * Heaven grant the thrall may ne'er forget to love his lord!

1 I have noticed that among Arab lovers it was the fashion to be jealous of the mistress's nightly phantom which, as amongst mesmerists, is the lover's embodied will.

I pray that Allah pardon all except thy love * Which, when I meet Him, may my bestest plea afford.

After ending this song she drank three cups and, filling the old man other three, improvised these couplets:—

His love he hid which tell-tale tears betrayed; * For burn of coal that 'neath his ribs was laid:
Giv'n that he seek his joy in spring and flowers * Some day, his spring's the face of dear-loved maid.
O ye who blame me for who baulks my love! * What sweeter thing than boon to man denayed?
A sun, yet scorcheth he my very heart! * A moon, but riseth he from breasts a-shade!

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept, whilst the Shaykh wept for her weeping. Then she fell down in a fainting fit, and presently recovering, crowned the cup and, drinking it off, gave the elder to drink, after which she took the lute and, breaking out into song, chanted these couplets:—

Thy parting is bestest of woes to my heart, * And changed my case till all sleep is eschewed:
The world to my being is desolate; * Then oh grief! and oh lingering solitude!
Maybe The Ruthful incline thee to me * And join us despite what our foes have sued!

Then she wept till her voice rose high, and her wailing was discovered to those without; after which she again began to drink and, plying the Shaykh with wine, sang these couplets:—

An they hid thy person from eyen-sight, * They hid not thy name fro' my mindful sprite:
Or meet me; thy ransom for meeting I'll be[1]! * Or fly me; and ransom I'll be for thy flight!
Mine outer speaks for mine inner case, * And mine inner speaks for mine outer plight.

When she had made an end of her verses, she threw the lute from her hand and wept and wailed. Then she slept awhile and presently awaking, said, "O Shaykh, say me, hast thou what we may eat?" He replied, "O my lady, I have the rest of the food"; but she cried, "I will not eat of the orts I have left. Go down to the bazar and fetch us what we may eat." He rejoined, "Excuse me, O my lady, I cannot rise to my feet, because

1 *i.e.*, I will lay down my life to save thee from sorrow—a common-place hyperbole of love.

I am bemused with wine; but with me is the servant of the mosque, who is a sharp youth and an intelligent. I will call him, so he may buy thee whatso thou wantest." Asked she, "Whence hast thou this servant?" and he answered, "He is of the people of Damascus." When she heard him say "of the people of Damascus," she sobbed such a sob that she swooned away; and when she came to herself, she said, "Woe is me for the people of Damascus, and for those who are therein! Call him, O Shaykh, that he may do our need." Accordingly, the old man put his head forth of the window and called the youth, who came to him from the mosque and sought leave to enter. The Muezzin bade him come in, and when he appeared before the damsel, he knew her and she knew him; whereupon he turned back in bewilderment and would have fled at haphazard; but she sprang up to him and held him fast, and they embraced and wept together, till they fell to the floor in a fainting fit. When the Shaykh saw them in this condition, he feared for himself and fared forth in fright, seeing not the way for drunkenness. His neighbour the Jew met him and asked him, "How is it that I behold thee astounded?" Answered the old man, "How should I not be astounded, seeing that the damsel who is with me is fallen in love with the mosque servant and they have embraced and slipped down in a swoon? Indeed, I fear lest the Caliph come to know of this and be wroth with me; so tell me thou what is thy device for that wherewith I am afflicted in the matter of this damsel?" Quoth the Jew, "For the present, take this casting-bottle of rose-water and go forthright and sprinkle them therewith: an they be aswoon for this their union and embrace, they will recover, and if otherwise, then take to flight." The Shaykh snatched the casting-bottle from the Jew and, going up to the twain, sprinkled their faces, whereupon they came to themselves and fell to relating each to other that which they had suffered, since both had been parted, for the pangs of severance. Nur al-Din also acquainted Sitt al-Milah with that which he had endured from the folk who would have killed[1] him and utterly annihilated him; and she said to him, "O my lord, let us for the

1 Arab. "Katl." I have noticed the Hibernian "kilt," which is not a bull but, like most provincialisms and Americanisms, a survival, an archaism. In the old Frisian dialect, which agrees with English in more words than "bread, butter, and cheese," we find the primary meaning of terms which with us have survived only in their secondary senses, *e.g.*, killen = to beat, and slagen = to strike Here is its great value to the English philologist When the Irishman complains that he is "kilt," we know through the Frisian what he really means.

nonce leave this talk and praise Allah for reunion of loves, and all this shall cease from us." Then she gave him the cup and he said, "By Allah, I will on no wise drink it whilst I am in this case!" So she drank it off before him and, taking the lute, swept the strings and sang these couplets:—

O absent fro' me and yet present in place, * Thou art far from mine eyes and yet ever nigh!
Thy farness bequeathed me all sorrow and care * And my troublous life can no joy espy:
Lone, forlorn, weeping-eyelidded, miserablest, * I abide for thy sake as though banisht I:
Then (ah grief o' me!) far thou hast fared from sight * Yet canst no more depart me than apple of eye!

When she had made an end of her verse, she wept, and the young man of Damascus, Nur al-Din, wept also. Then she took the lute and improvised these couplets:—

Well Allah wots I never namèd you * But tears o'erbrimming eyes in floods outburst;
And passion raged and pine would do me die, * Yet my heart rested wi' the thought it nurst;
O eye-light mine, O wish and O my hope! * Your face can never quench mine eyes' hot thirst.

When Nur al-Din heard these his slave-girl's verses, he fell a-weeping, while she strained him to her bosom and wiped away his tears with her sleeve, and questioned him and comforted his mind. Then she took the lute and sweeping its strings played thereon with such performing as would move the staidest to delight, and sang these couplets:—

Indeed, what day brings not your sight to me * That day I rem'mber not as dight to me!
And, when I vainly long on you to look, * My life is lost, oh, life and light o' me!

After this fashion they fared till the morning, tasting not the nourishment of sleep[1]; and when the day lightened, behold the eunuch came with the she-mule and said to Sitt al-Milah, "The Commander of the Faithful calleth for thee." So she arose and, taking by the hand her lord, committed him to the Shaykh, saying, "This is the deposit of Allah, then thy deposit,[2] till this eunuch

1 The decency of this description is highly commendable, and I may note that the Bresl. Edit. is comparatively free from erotic pictures.

2 *i.e.*, "I commit him to thy charge under God."

cometh to thee; and indeed, O elder, my due to thee is the white hand of favour such as filleth the interval betwixt heaven and earth." Then she mounted the mule and repairing to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, went in to him and kissed ground before him. Quoth he to her, as who should make mock of her, "I doubt not but thou hast found thy lord"; and quoth she, "By thy felicity and the length of thy continuance on life, I have indeed found him!" Now Al-Rashid was leaning back; but, when he heard this, he sat upright and said to her, "By my life, true?" She replied, "Ay, by thy life!" He said, "Bring him into my presence, so I may see him"; but she said, "O my lord, there have happened to him many hardships, and his charms are changed and his favour faded; and indeed the Prince of True Believers vouchsafed me a month; wherefore I will tend him the rest of the month and then bring him to do his service to the Commander of the Faithful." Quoth Al-Rashid, "Sooth thou sayest: the condition certainly was for a month; but tell me what hath betided him." Quoth she, "O my lord (Allah prolong thy continuance, and make Paradise thy place of returning and thine asylum, and the fire the abiding-place of thy foes!), when he presenteth himself to serve thee, he will assuredly expound to thee his case and will name to thee his wrong-doers; and indeed this is an arrear that is due to the Prince of True Believers, by whom may Allah fortify the Faith, and vouchsafe him the victory over rebel and froward wretch!" Thereupon he ordered her a fine house, and bade furnish it with carpets and vessels of choice, and commanded them to give all she needed. This was done during the rest of the day, and when the night came she sent the eunuch with a suit of clothes and the mule, to fetch Nur al-Din from the Muezzin's lodging. So the young man donned the dress and mounting rode to the house, where he abode in comfort and luxury a full-told month, while she solaced him with four things, the eating of fowls, and the drinking of wine, and the sleeping upon brocade, and the entering the bath after amorous refreshment. Furthermore, she brought him six suits of linen stuffs and took to changing his clothes day by day; nor was the appointed time of delay accomplished ere his beauty and loveliness returned to him: nay, his favour waxed tenfold fairer, and he became a seduction to all who looked upon him. One day of the days Al-Rashid bade bring him to the presence; so his slave-girl changed his clothes and robing him in sumptuous raiment mounted him on the she-mule. Then he rode to the palace and, presenting himself before the Caliph, saluted him with the goodliest of salutations,

and bespake him with Truchman's[1] speech eloquent and deep-thoughted. When Al-Rashid saw him, he marvelled at the seemliness of his semblance and his loquence and eloquence, and asking of him, was told that he was Sitt al-Milah's lord; whereupon quoth he, "Indeed, she is excusable in her love for him, and if we had put her to death wrongfully, as we were minded to do, her blood would have been upon our heads." Then he accosted the young man and entering into discourse with him, found him well-bred, intelligent, clever, quick-witted, generous, pleasant, elegant, excellent. So he loved him with exceeding love and questioned him of his native city and of his sire, and of the cause of his journey to Baghdad. Nur al-Din acquainted him with that which he would know in the goodliest words and concisest phrases; and the Caliph asked him, "And where hast thou been absent all this while? Verily, we sent after thee to Damascus and Mosul and all other cities, but happened on no tidings of thee." Answered the young man, "O my lord, there betided thy slave in thy capital that which never yet betided any." Then he acquainted him with his case, first and last, and told him that which had befallen him of evil from Al-Muradi and the Chief of Police. Now when Al-Rashid heard this, he was chagrined with sore chagrin and waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, "Shall this thing happen in a city wherein I am?" And the Háshim' vein[2] started out between his eyes. Then he bade fetch Ja'afar, and when he came between his hands he acquainted him with the adventure and said to him, "Shall this thing come to pass in my city and I have no news of it?" Thereupon he bade Ja'afar fetch all whom the young Damascene had named, and when they came he bade smite their necks: he also summoned him whom they called Ahmad, and who had been the means of the young man's deliverance a first time and a second, and thanked him and showed him favour, and bestowed on him a costly robe of honour, and made him Chief of Police in his city.[3] Then he sent for the Shaykh, the Muezzin, and when the messenger came to him and told him that the Commander of the Faithful summoned him, he feared the denunciation of the damsel, and walked with him to the palace, breaking wind for fear as he went, whilst all who passed him by laughed at him. When he came into the presence of the Commander of the Faithful, he fell a-trembling and his tongue

1 Arab. (and Heb.) "Tarjumán"=a dragoman, for which see vol. i. night x. In the next tale it will occur with the sense of polyglottic.

2 See vol. i. night xxxv.

3 After putting to death the unjust Prefect.

was tied,[1] so that he could not speak. The Caliph smiled at him and said, "O Shaykh, thou hast done no offence; so why fearest thou?" Answered the old man (and indeed he was in the sorest of that which may be of fear), "O my lord, by the virtue of thy pure forefathers, indeed I have done naught, and do thou enquire of my manners and morals." The Caliph laughed at him and ordering him a thousand dinars, bestowed on him a costly robe of honour, and made him headman of the Muezzins in his mosque. Then he called Sitt al-Milah and said to her, "The house wherein thou lodgest with all it containeth is a largesse to thy lord: so do thou take him and depart with him in the safeguard of Allah Almighty; but absent not yourselves from our presence." Accordingly she went forth with the young Damascene, and when she came to the house she found that the Prince of True Believers had sent them gifts galore and good things in store. As for Nur al-Din, he sent for his father and mother, and appointed for himself agents in the city of Damascus to receive the rent of the houses and gardens and Wakalahs and Hammams; and they occupied themselves with collecting that which accrued to him and sending it to him every year. Meanwhile, his father and mother came to him, with that which they had of monies and merchandise of price and, foregathering with their son, found that he was become of the chief officers and familiars of the Commander of the Faithful, and of the number of his sitting-companions and nightly entertainers, wherefore they rejoiced in reunion with him and he also rejoiced in them. The Caliph assigned them solde and allowances; and as for Nur al-Din, his father brought him those riches, and his wealth waxed and his estate was stablished, till he became the richest of the folk of his time in Baghdad, and left not the presence of the Commander of the Faithful or by night or by day. He was vouchsafed issue by Sitt al-Milah, and he ceased not to live the goodliest of lives, he and she and his father and his mother, a while of time, till Abu al-Hasan sickened of a sore sickness and departed to the mercy of Allah Almighty. Presently, his mother also died and he carried them forth and shrouded them and buried and made them expiations and funeral ceremonies.[2] In due course his children grew up and became like moons, and he reared them in splendour and affection, while his wealth waxed and his case never waned. He ceased not to pay frequent visits to the

1 Arab. "Lajlaj." See vol. vii. night dcccclxxxii.

2 Arab. "Mawálid" lit. = nativity festivals (plur. of Maulid). See vol. vii. night dcccclxxvi.

Commander of the Faithful, he and his children and his slave-girl Sitt al-Milah, and they abode in all solace of life and prosperity till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and laud to the Abiding, the Eternal! This is all that hath come down to us of their story.

TALE OF KING INS BIN KAYS AND HIS DAUGHTER WITH THE SON OF KING AL-'ABBAS.[1]

THERE was once, in days of yore, and in ages and times long gone before, in the city of Baghdad, the House of Peace, a king mighty of estate, lord of understanding and beneficence, and generosity and munificence, and he was strong of sultanate, and endowed with might and majesty and magnificence. His name was Ins bin Kays bin Rabí' al-Shaybání,[2] and when he took horse there rode about him riders from the farthest parts of the two Iraks.[3] Almighty Allah decreed that he should take to wife a woman hight 'Afífah, daughter of Asad al-Sundúsi, who was endowed with beauty and loveliness and brightness, and perfect grace and symmetry of shape and stature; her face was like the crescent moon, and she had eyes as they were gazelle's eyes, and an aquiline nose like Luna's cymb. She had learned cavalrice and the use of arms, and had mastered the sciences of the Arabs; eke she had gotten by heart all the dragomanish[4] tongues, and indeed she was a ravishment to mankind. She abode with Ins bin Kays twelve years, during which time he was not blessed with children by her; so his breast was straitened by reason of the failure of lineage, and

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. xii. pp. 116-237, nights dccccLxvi.-dccccLxxix. Mr. Payne entitles it, "El Abbas and the King's Daughter of Baghdad."

2 "Of the Shaybán tribe." I have noticed (vol. i. night xxxiv.) how loosely the title Malik (King) is applied in Arabic and in mediæval Europe. But it is ultra-Shakespearian to place a Badawi King in Baghdad, the capital founded by the Abbasides and ruled by those Caliphs till their downfall.

3 *i.e.*, Irák Arabí (Chaldæa), and 'Ajami (Western Persia). For the meaning of Al-Irák, which always, except in verse, takes the article, see vol. ii. night liii.

4 See *supra*, p. 376. Mr. Payne suspects a clerical error for "Turkumániyah" = Turcomanish; but this is hardly acceptable.

he besought his Lord to vouchsafe him a son. Accordingly the queen conceived, by permission of Allah Almighty; and when the days of her pregnancy were accomplished, she gave birth to a maid-child, than whom never saw eyes fairer, for that her face was as it were a pearl pure-bright or a lamp raying light, or a candle gilt with gold, or a full moon breaking cloudy fold, extolled be He who her from vile water dight, and made her to the beholders a delight! When her father saw her in this fashion of loveliness his reason fled for joy, and when she grew up he taught her writing and *belles-lettres* and philosophy, and all manner of tongues. So she excelled the folk of her time and surpassed her peers; and the sons of the kings heard of her, and all of them longed to look upon her. The first who sought her to wife was King Nabhán[1] of Mosul, who came to her with a great company, bringing an hundred she-camels, laden with musk and lign-aloes and ambergris, and five score loaded with camphor and jewels, and other hundred laden with silver monies, and yet other hundred loaded with raiment of silken stuffs, sendal and brocade, besides an hundred slave-girls and a century of choice steeds of swift and generous breeds, completely housed and accoutred as they were brides; and all this he had laid before her father, demanding her of him in wedlock. Now King Ins bin Kays had bound himself by an oath that he would not marry his daughter save to him whom she should choose; so, when King Nabhan sought her in marriage, her father went in to her and consulted her concerning his affair. She consented not, and he repeated to Nabhan that which she said, whereupon he departed from him. After this came King Bahrám, lord of the White Island, with treasures richer than the first; but she accepted not of him, and he returned disappointed; nor did the kings cease coming to her sire, on her account, one after other, from the farthest of the lands and the climes, each glorying in bringing more than those who forewent him; but she heeded not any one of them. Presently, Al-'Abbás, son of King Al-'Azíz, lord of the land of Al-Yaman and Zabídún[2] and Meccah (which Allah increase in honour and brightness and beauty!) heard of her; and he was of the great ones of Meccah and Al-Hijáz[3] and was a youth without hair on his side-face. So he presented himself one day

1 As fabulous a personage as "King Kays."

2 Possibly a clerical error for Zabíd, the famous capital of the Tahámah, or lowlands of Al-Yaman.

3 The Moslem's Holy Land whose capital is Meccah.

in his sire's assembly, whereupon the folk made way for him, and the king seated him on a chair of red gold, crusted with pearls and gems. The Prince sat, with his head bowed ground-wards and spake not to any: whereby his father knew that his breast was straitened, and bade the cup-companions and men of wit relate marvellous histories, such as beseem the sessions of kings; nor was there one of them but spoke forth the goodliest of that which was with him; but Al-'Abbás still abode with his head bowed down. Then the king bade his sitting-companions withdraw, and when the chamber was private, he looked at his son and said to him, "By Allah, thou cheerest me with thy coming in to me, and chagrinest me for that thou payest no heed to any of the familiars nor of the cup-companions. What is the cause of this?" Answered the Prince, "O my papa, I have heard tell that in the land of Al-Irák is a woman of the daughters of the kings, and her father is called King Ins bin Kays, lord of Baghdad; she is famed for beauty and loveliness and brightness and perfect grace, and indeed many of the kings have sought her in marriage; but her soul consented not unto any one of them. Wherefore my thought prompteth me to travel herwards, for that my heart cleaveth to her, and I beseech thee suffer me to go to her." His sire replied, "O my son, thou knowest that I have none other than thyself of children, and thou art the coolth of mine eyes and the fruit of my vitals; nay, I cannot brook to be parted from thee a single hour, and I purpose to seat thee on the throne of the kingship and espouse thee to one of the daughters of the kings, who shall be fairer than she." Al-Abbas gave ear to his father's word and dared not gainsay him; wherefore he abode with him awhile, whilst the love-fire raged in his vitals. Then the king took rede with himself to build his son a Hammam and adorn it with various paintings, so he might display it to him and divert him with the sight thereof, to the intent that his body might be solaced thereby, and that the accident of travel might cease from him and he be turned from his purpose of removal from his parents. Presently he addressed himself to the building of the bath and, assembling architects and artisans from all his cities and citadels and islands, assigned them a foundation-site and marked out its boundaries. Then the workmen occupied themselves with the building of the Hammam, and the ordinance and adornment of its cabinets and roofs. They used paints and precious minerals of all kinds, according to the contrast of their colours, red and green and blue and yellow, and what not else of all manner tincts; and each artisan wrought at his craft and each painter at his art, whilst the

rest of the folk busied themselves with transporting thither varicoloured stones. One day, as the Master-painter wrought at his work, there came in to him a poor man, who looked long upon him and observed his mystery; whereupon quoth the artist to him, "Knowest thou aught of painting?" Quoth the stranger, "Yes"; so he gave him tools and paints and said to him, "Limn for us a rare semblance." Accordingly the pauper stranger entered one of the bath-chambers and drew on its walls a double border, which he adorned on both sides, after a fashion than which eyes never saw a fairer. Moreover, amiddlemost the chamber he limned a picture to which there lacked but the breath,[1] and it was the portraiture of Máriyah, daughter to the king of Baghdad. Then, when he had finished the portrait, he went his way and told none of what he had done, nor knew any wight the chambers and doors of the bath and the adornment and ordinance thereof. Presently the chief artisan came to the palace and sought audience of the king who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing the earth, saluted him with a salam beseeming Sultans and said, "O king of the time and lord of the age and the tide, may prosperity endure to thee and acceptance and eke thy degree over all the kings both morning and evening[2] exalted be! The work of the bath is accomplished, by the king's fair fortune and the purity of his purpose, and indeed we have done all that behoved us, and there remaineth but that which behoveth the king." Al-Aziz ordered him a costly robe of honour and expended monies galore, giving unto each who had wroughten after the measure of his work. Then he assembled in the Hammam all the Lords of his realm, Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains and Nabobs, and the chief officers of his kingdom and household, and sending for his son Al-Abbas, said to him, "O my son, I have builded thee a bath, wherein thou mayst take thy pleasance; so enter that thou mayst see it and divert thyself by gazing upon it and viewing the beauty of its ordinance and decoration." "With love and gladness," replied the Prince and entered the bath, he and the king and the folk about them, so they might divert themselves with viewing that which the workmen's hands had worked. Al-Abbas went in and passed from place to place and chamber to chamber, till he came to the room aforesaid and espied the portrait of Mariyah, whereupon he fell down in

1 A hinted protest against making a picture or a statue which the artist cannot quicken; as this process will be demanded of him on Doomsday. Hence also the Princess is called Máriyah (Maria, Mary) a non-Moslem name.

2 *i.e.*, day and night, for ever.

a fainting fit and the workmen went to his father and said to him, "Thy son Al-Abbas hath swooned away." So the king came and finding his son cast down, seated himself at his head and bathed his face with rose-water. After awhile he revived and the king said to him, "I seek refuge with Allah for thee, O my son! What accident hath befallen thee?" The Prince replied, "O my father, I did but look on yonder picture and it bequeathed me a thousand qualms, and there befell me that which thou beholdest." Therewith the king bade fetch the Master-painter, and when he stood before him, he said to him, "Tell me of yonder portrait and what girl is this of the daughters of the kings; else I will take thy head." Said the painter, "By Allah, O king, I limned it not, neither know I who she is; but there came to me a poor man and looked hard at me. So I asked him, Knowest thou the art of painting? and he answered, Yes. Whereupon I gave him the gear and said to him, Limn for us a rare semblance. Accordingly he painted yonder portrait and went away and I wot him not, neither have I ever set eyes on him save that day." Hearing this, the king ordered all his officers to go round about in the thoroughfares and colleges, and to bring before him all strangers they found there. So they went forth and brought him much people, amongst whom was the pauper who had painted the portrait. When they came into the presence, the Sultan bade the crier make public proclamation that whoso wrought the portrait should discover himself and have whatso he wished. Thereupon the poor man came forward and kissing the ground before the king, said to him, "O king of the age, I am he who limned yonder likeness." Quoth Al-Aẓiz, "And knowest thou who she is?" and quoth the other, "Yes, this is the portrait of Mariyah, daughter of the king of Baghdad." The king ordered him a robe of honour and a slave-girl, and he went his way. Then said Al-Abbas, "O my papa, give me leave to seek her, so I may look upon her: else shall I farewell the world, withouten fail." The king his father wept and answered, "O my son, I builded thee a Hammam, that it might turn thee from leaving me, and behold, it hath been the cause of thy going forth; but the behest of Allah is a determinate decree.[1]" Then he wept again and

1 Koran xxxiii. 38; this concludes a "revelation" concerning the divorce and marriage to Mohammed of the wife of his adopted son Zayd. Such union, superstitiously held incestuous by all Arabs, was a terrible scandal to the rising Faith, and could be abated only by the "Commandment of Allah." Zayd and Abu Lahab (chap. cxi. i.) are the only contemporaries of Mohammed named in the Koran.

Al-Abbas said to him, "Fear not for me, for thou knowest my prowess and puissance in returning answers in the assemblies of the land, and my good breeding and accomplishments together with my skill in rhetoric; and indeed for him whose father thou art and whom thou hast reared and bred, and in whom thou hast united praiseworthy qualities, the repute whereof hath traversed the East and the West, thou needest not fear aught, more especially as I purpose but to seek pleasuring and return to thee, an it be the will of Allah Almighty." Quoth the king, "Whom wilt thou take with thee of attendants and what of monies?" Replied Al-Abbas, "O my papa, I have no need of horses or camels or weapons, for I purpose not warfare, and I will have none go forth with me save my page 'Amir and no more." Now as he and his father were thus engaged in talk, in came his mother and caught hold of him; and he said to her, "Allah upon thee, let me gang my gait and strive not to divert me from what purpose I have purposed, for needs must I go." She replied, "O my son, if it must be so and there be no help for it, swear to me that thou wilt not be absent from me more than a year." And he sware to her. Then he entered his father's treasuries and took therefrom what he would of jewels and jacinths and everything weighty of worth and light of load: he also bade his servant Amir saddle him two steeds and the like for himself, and whenas the night beset his back,[1] he rose from his couch and mounting his horse, set out for Baghdad, he and Amir, whilst the page knew not whither he intended.[2] He gave not over going and the journey was joyous to him, till they came to a goodly land, abounding in birds and wild beasts, whereupon Al-Abbas started a gazelle and shot it with a shaft. Then he dismounted and, cutting its throat, said to his servant, "Alight thou and skin it and carry it to the water." Amir answered him with "Hearkening and obedience," and going down to the water, built a fire and broiled the gazelle's flesh. Then they ate their fill and drank of the water, after which they mounted again and fared on with diligent faring, and Amir still unknowing whither Al-Abbas was minded to wend. So he said to him, "O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah of All-might, wilt thou not tell me whither thou intendest?" Al-Abbas looked at him and in reply improvised these couplets:—

1 *i.e.*, darkened behind him.

2 Here we have again, as so common in Arab romances, the expedition of a modified Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

In my vitals are fires of desire and repine; * And naught I reply when they flare on high:
Baghdad-wards I hie me on life-and-death work, * Loving one who distorts my right judgment awry:
A swift camel under me shortcuts the wold * And deem it a cloud all who nearhand espy:
O 'Ámir make haste after model of her * Who would heal mine ill and Love's cup drain dry:
For the leven of love burns the vitals of me; * So with me seek my tribe and stint all reply.

When Amir heard his lord's verses, he knew that he was a slave of love and that she whom he loved abode in Baghdad. Then they fared on night and day, traversing plain and stony way, till they sighted Baghdad and lighted down in its environs[1] and there lay their night. When they arose in the morning, they removed to the bank of the Tigris, where they encamped and sojourned a second day and a third. As they abode thus on the fourth day, behold, a company of folk giving their beasts the rein and crying aloud and saying, "Quick! Quick! Haste to our rescue, Ho thou the King!" Therewith the King's chamberlains and officers accosted them and said, "What is behind you and what hath betided you?" Quoth they, "Bring us before the King." So they carried them to Ins bin Kays; and when they saw him, they said to him, "O King, unless thou succour us, we are dead men; for that we are a folk of the Banú Shaybán,[2] who have taken up our abode in the parts of Bassorah, and Hodhayfah, the wild Arab, hath come down on us with his steeds and his men and hath slain our horsemen and carried off our women and children; nor was one saved of the tribe but he who fled; wherefore we crave help first by Allah Almighty, then by thy life." When the King heard their speech, he bade the crier proclaim in the highways of the city that the troops should busk them to march, and that the horsemen should mount and the footmen fare forth; nor was it but the twinkling of the eye ere the kettle-drums beat and the trumpets blared: and scarce was the forenoon of the day passed when the city was blocked with horse and foot. Presently, the king reviewed them and behold, they were four-and-twenty thousand in number, cavalry and infantry. He bade them go forth to the enemy and gave the command of them to Sa'ad ibn al-Wákidí, a doughty cavalier and a dauntless champion; so the horsemen set out and fared on along the Tigris-bank.

1 Arab. "Arzi-há" = in its earth, its outlying suburbs.
2 The king's own tribe.

Al-Abbas, son of King Al-Aziz, looked at them and saw the flags flaunting and the standards stirring and heard the kettle-drums beating; so he bade his page saddle him a blood-steed and look to the surcingles and bring him his harness of war, for indeed horsemanship[1] was rooted in his heart. Quoth Amir, "And indeed I saw Al-Abbas, his eyes waxed red and the hair of his hands on end." So he mounted his charger, whilst Amir also bestrode a destrier, and they went forth with the commando and fared on two days. On the third day, after the hour of the mid-afternoon prayer, they came in sight of the foe, and the two armies met and the two ranks joined in fight. The strife raged amain and sore was the strain, whilst the dust rose in clouds and hung in vaulted shrouds, so that all eyes were blinded; and they ceased not from the battle till the night overtook them,[2] when the two hosts drew off from the mellay and passed the night, perplexed concerning themselves. When Allah caused the morning to morrow, the two hosts were aligned in line and their thousands fixed their eyne and the troops stood looking one at other. Then sallied forth Al-Háris ibn Sa'ad between the two lines and played with his lance and cried out and improvised these couplets:—

You in every way are this day our prey; * And ever we prayèd your sight to see:
The Ruthful drave you Hodhayfah-wards * To the Brave, the Lion who sways the free:
Say, amid you's a man who would heal his ills, * With whose lust of battle shrewd blows agree?
Then by Allah meet me who come to you, * And whoso is wronged shall the wronger be.[3]

Thereupon there sallied forth to him Zuhayr bin Habíb, and they wheeled about and wiled a while, then they exchanged strokes. Al-Haris forewent his foe in smiting and stretched him weltering in his gore; whereupon Hodhayfah cried out to him, "Gifted of Allah[4] art thou, O Haris! Call out another of them." So he cried aloud, "I say, who be a champion?" But they of

1 *i.e.*, he was always "spoiling for a fight."

2 In the text the last two sentences are spoken by Amir and the story-teller suddenly resumes the third person.

3 Mr. Payne translates this, "And God defend the right."

4 Arab. "Lillâhi darruk"; see vol. iii. night ccxlv. Captain Lockett (p. 28) justly remarks that "it is a sort of encomiastic exclamation of frequent occurrence in Arabic and much easier to comprehend than translate." Darra signifies flowing freely (as milk from the udder), and was metaphorically transferred to bounty and to indoles or natural capacity. Thus the phrase means, "your flow of milk is by or through Allah," *i.e.*, of unusual abundance.

Baghdad held back from him; and when it appeared to Al-Haris that consternation was amongst them, he charged down upon them and overrolled the first of them upon the last of them and slew of them twelve men. Then the evening caught him and the Baghdadis began addressing themselves to flight. No sooner had the morning morrowed than they found themselves reduced to a fourth part of their number, and there was not one of them had dismounted from his horse. Wherefore they made sure of destruction, and Hodhayfah rushed out between the two lines (now he was reckoned good for a thousand knights), and cried out, "Harkye, my masters of Baghdad! Let none come forth to me but your Emir, so I may talk with him and he with me; and he shall meet me in combat singular and I will meet him, and may he who is clear of offence come off safe." Then he repeated his words and said, "How is it I see your Emir refuse me a reply?" But Sa'ad, the Emir of the army of Baghdad, answered him not, and indeed his teeth chattered in his mouth, when he heard him summon him to the duello. Now when Al-Abbas heard Hodhayfah's challenge and saw Sa'ad in this case, he came up to the Emir and asked him, "Wilt thou suffer me to answer him, and I will be thy substitute in replying him and in monomachy with him and will make my life thy sacrifice?" Sa'ad looked at him and, seeing knighthood shining from between his eyes, said to him, "O youth, by the virtue of Mustafà the Chosen Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!), tell me who thou art and whence thou comest to bring us victory[1]?" Quoth the Prince, "This is no place for questioning"; and quoth Sa'ad to him, "O Knight, up and at Hodhayfah! Yet, if his Satan prove too strong for thee, afflict not thyself in thy youth.[2]" Al-Abbas cried, "Allah is He of whom help is to be sought[3]"; and, taking his arms, fortified his purpose and went down into the field, as he were a fort of the forts or a mountain's contrefort. Thereupon Hodhayfah cried out to him, saying, "Haste thee not, O youth! Who art thou of the folk?" He replied, "I am Sa'ad ibn al-Wakidi, commander of the host of King Ins, and but for thy pride in challenging me I had not come forth to thee; for thou art no peer for me to front, nor as mine equal dost thou count, nor canst

1 The words are euphemistic: we should say, "comest thou to our succour?"

2 *i.e.*, If his friend the Devil be overstrong for thee, flee him rather than be slain; as

He who fights and runs away
Shall live to fight another day.

3 *i.e.*, I look to Allah for aid.

thou bear my brunt. Wherefore get thee ready for the last march[1] seeing that there abideth but a little of thy life." When Hodhayfah heard this speech, he threw himself backwards,[2] as if in mockery of him, whereat Al-Abbas was wroth and called out to him, saying, "O Hodhayfah, guard thyself against me." Then he rushed upon him, as he were a swooper of the Jinn,[3] and Hodhayfah met him and they wheeled about a long while. Presently, Al-Abbas cried out at Hodhayfah a cry which astounded him, and struck him a stroke, saying, "Take this from the hand of a brave who feareth not the like of thee." Hodhayfah met the sabre-sway with his shield, thinking to ward it off from him; but the blade shore the target in sunder and, descending upon his shoulder, came forth gleaming from the tendons of his throat and severed his arm at the armpit; whereupon he fell down, wallowing in his blood, and Al-Abbas turned upon his host; nor had the sun departed the dome of the welkin ere Hodhayfah's army was in full flight before Al-Abbas and the saddles were empty of men. Quoth Sa'ad, "By the virtue of Mustafa the Chosen Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!) I saw Al-Abbas with the blood upon his saddle-pads, in clots like camels' livers, smiting with the sword right and left, till he scattered them abroad in every gorge and wold; and when he hied him back to the camp the men of Baghdad were fearful of him." But as soon as they saw this victory which had betided them over their foes, they turned back, and gathering together the weapons and treasures and horses of those they had slain, returned to Baghdad, victorious, and all by the knightly valour of Al-Abbas. As for Sa'ad, he foregathered with his lord, and they fared on in company till they came to the place where Al-Abbas had taken horse, whereupon the Prince dismounted from his charger and Sa'ad said to him, "O youth, wherefore alightest thou in other than thy place? Indeed, thy rights be incumbent upon us and upon our Sultan; so go thou with us to the dwellings, that we may ransom thee with our souls." Replied Al-Abbas, "O Emir Sa'ad, from this place I took horse with thee and herein is my lodging. So, Allah upon thee, mention not me to the king, but make as if thou hadst never seen me because I am a stranger in the land." So saying, he turned away from him and Sa'ad fared on to his palace, where he found

1 *i.e.*, to the next world.

2 This falling backwards in laughter commonly occurs during the earlier tales; it is, however, very rare amongst the Badawin.

3 *i.e.*, as he were a flying Jinni, swooping down and pouncing falcon-like upon a mortal from the upper air.

all the courtiers in attendance on the king and recounting to him that which had betided them with Al-Abbas. Quoth the king, "Where is he?" and quoth they, "He is with the Emir Sa'ad." So, when the Emir entered, the king looked, but found none with him; and Sa'ad, seeing at a glance that he longed to look upon the youth, cried out to him, saying, "Allah prolong the king's days! Indeed, he refuseth to present himself before thee, without order or leave." Asked the king, "O Sa'ad, whence cometh this man?" and the Emir answered, "O my lord, I know not; but he is a youth fair of favour, amiable of aspect, accomplished in address, ready of repartee, and valour shineth from between his eyes." Quoth the king, "O Sa'ad, fetch him to me, for indeed thou describest to me at full length a mighty matter.[1]" And he answered, saying, "By Allah, O my lord, hadst thou but seen our case with Hodhayfah, when he challenged me to the field of fight and the stead of cut-and-thrust, and I held back from doing battle with him! Then, as I thought to go forth to him, behold, a knight gave loose to his bridle-rein and called out to me, saying:—O Sa'ad, wilt thou suffer me to be thy substitute in waging war with him and I will ransom thee with myself? And quoth I, By Allah, O youth, whence comest thou? and quoth he, This be no time for thy questions, while Hodhayfah standeth awaiting thee." Thereupon he repeated to the king all that had passed between himself and Al-Abbas from first to last; whereat cried Ins bin Kays, "Bring him to me in haste, so we may learn his tidings and question him of his case." "'Tis well," replied Sa'ad, and going forth of the king's presence, repaired to his own house, where he doffed his war-harness and took rest for himself. On this wise fared it with the Emir Sa'ad; but as regards Al-Abbas, when he dismounted from he destrier, he doffed his war-gear and reposed himself awhile; after which he brought out a body-dress of Venetian[2] silk and a gown of green damask and, donning them, bound about his head a turband of Damietta stuff and zoned his waist with a kerchief. Then he went out a-walking in the highways of Baghdad, and fared on till he came to the bazar of the traders. There he found a merchant with chess before him; so the Prince stood watching him, and presently the other looked up at him and asked him, "O youth, what

1 This may be (reading Imraan = man, for Amran = matter), "a masterful man"; but I can hardly accept it.

2 Arab. "Bunduki," the adj of Bunduk, which the Moslems evidently learned from Slav sources; Venedik being the Dalmatian corruption of Venezia. See Dubrovenedik in vol. ii. night lxxxviii.

wilt thou bet upon the game?" He answered, "Be it thine to decide." Said the merchant, "Then be it an hundred dinars," and Al-Abbas consented to him; whereupon quoth he, "Produce the money, O youth, so the game may be fairly stablished." Accordingly Al-Abbas brought out a satin purse, wherein were a thousand dinars, and laid down an hundred dinars therefrom on the edge of the carpet, whilst the merchant produced the like, and indeed, his reason fled for joy when he saw the gold in possession of Al-Abbas. The folk flocked about them, to divert themselves with watching the play, and they called the bystanders to witness the wager and, after the stakes were duly staked, the twain fell a-playing. Al-Abbas forebore the merchant, so he might lead him on, and dallied with him a full hour; and the merchant won and took of him the hundred dinars. Then said the Prince, "Wilt thou play another partie?" and the other said, "O youth, I will not play again, save for a thousand dinars." Quoth the youth, "Whatsoever thou stakest, I will match thy stake with its like." So the merchant brought out a thousand dinars, and the Prince covered them with other thousand. Then the game began, but Al-Abbas was not long with him ere he beat him in the house of the elephant,[1] nor did he cease to do thus till he had beaten him four times and won of him four thousand dinars. This was all the merchant had of money; so he said, "O youth, I will play thee another game for the shop." Now the value of the shop was four thousand dinars; so they played, and Al-Abbas beat him and won his shop, with whatso was therein; upon which the other arose, shaking his clothes,[2] and said to him, "Up, O youth, and take thy shop." Accordingly, Al-Abbas arose and repairing to the shop, took possession thereof, after which he returned to the place where he had left his servant Amir, and found there the Emir Sa'ad, who was come to bid him to the presence of the king. The Prince consented to this, and accompanied him till they came before King Ins bin Kays, whereupon he kissed the ground and saluted him, and exaggerated[3] the salutation. So the king asked him, "Whence comest thou, O youth, and whither goest thou?" and he answered, "I come from Al-Yaman." Then said the king, "Hast thou a need we may fulfil to thee; for indeed

1 *i.e.*, the castle's square.

2 In sign of quitting possession. Chess in Europe is rarely played for money, with the exception of public matches: this, however, is not the case amongst Easterns, who are also for the most part as tricky as an old lady at cribbage rightly named.

3 *i.e.*, he was as eloquent and courtly as he could be.

thou hast strong claims to our favour after that which thou didst in the matter of Hodhayfah and his folk?" And he commanded to cast over him a mantle of Egyptian satin, worth an hundred dinars. He also bade his treasurer give him a thousand dinars, and said to him, "O youth, take this in part of that which thou deservest of us; and if thou prolong thy sojourn with us, we will give thee slaves and servants." Al-Abbas kissed ground and said, "O king, Allah grant thee abiding weal, I deserve not all this." Then he put his hand to his pouch and pulling out two caskets of gold, in each of which were rubies whose value none could estimate, gave them to the king, saying, "O king, Allah cause thy welfare to endure, I conjure thee by that which the Almighty hath vouchsafed thee, heal my heart by accepting these two caskets, even as I have accepted thy present." So the king accepted the two caskets and Al-Abbas took his leave and went away to the bazar. Now when the merchants saw him they accosted him and said, "O youth, wilt thou not open thy shop?" As they were addressing him, up came a woman, having with her a boy bare of head and stood looking at Al-Abbas, till he turned to her, when she said to him, "O youth, I conjure thee by Allah, look at this boy and have ruth on him, for that his father hath forgotten his skull-cap in the shop he lost to thee; so, an thou see fit to give it him, thy reward be with Allah! For, indeed, the child maketh our hearts ache with his excessive weeping, and the Lord be witness for us that, had they left us aught wherewith to buy him a cap in its stead, we had not sought it of thee." Replied Al-Abbas, "O adornment of womankind,[1] indeed, thou bespeakest me with thy fair speech and supplicatest me with thy goodly words! But bring me thy husband." So she went and fetched the merchant, whilst a crowd collected to see what Al-Abbas would do. When the man came, he returned him the gold he had won of him, art and part, and delivered him the keys of the shop, saying, "Requite us with thy pious prayers." Therewith the woman came up to him and kissed his feet, and in like fashion did the merchant her husband: and all who were present blessed him, and there was no talk but of Al-Abbas. Thus fared it with him; but as for the merchant, he bought him a head of sheep[2] and slaughtering it, roasted it and dressed birds and other meats of various kinds and colours, and purchased

1 Arab. "Yá Zinat al-Nisá," which may either be a P.N. or a polite address, as *Bella fé* (Handsome woman) is to any feminine in Southern Italy.

2 Arab. "Raas Ghanam": this form of expressing singularity is common to Arabic and the Eastern languages, which it has influenced.

dessert and sweetmeats and fresh fruits; then he repaired to Al-Abbas and conjured him to accept of his hospitality and visit his home and eat of his provaunt. The Prince consented to his wishes and went with him till they came to his house, when the merchant bade him enter; so Al-Abbas went in and saw a goodly house, wherein was a handsome saloon with a vaulted ceiling. When he entered the saloon, he found that the merchant had made ready food and dessert and perfumes, such as may not be described; and indeed he had adorned the table with sweet-scented flowers and sprinkled musk and rose-water upon the food; and he had smeared the saloon walls with ambergris and had burned aloes-wood therein and Nadd. Presently, Al-Abbas looked out of the window of the saloon and saw by its side a house of goodly ordinance, tall of base and wide of space, with rooms manifold and two upper stories crowning the whole; but therein was no sign of inhabitants. So he said to the merchant, "Verily, thou exaggeratest in doing us honour; but, by Allah, I will not eat of thy meat until thou tell me what hath caused the voidance of yonder house." Said he, "O my lord, that was Al-Ghitrif's house and he passed away to the mercy of the Almighty and left no heir save myself; whereupon the mansion became mine, and by Allah, an thou have a mind to sojourn in Baghdad, take up thine abode in this house, whereby thou mayst be in my neighbourhood; for that verily my heart inclineth unto thee with affection, and I would have thee never absent from mine eyes, so I may still have my fill of thee and hearken to thy speech." Al-Abbas thanked him and said to him, "By Allah, thou art indeed friendly in thy converse and thou exaggeratest in thy discourse, and needs must I sojourn in Baghdad. As for the house, if it please thee to lodge me, I will abide therein; so accept of me its price." Therewith he put hand to his pouch and, bringing out from it three hundred dinars, gave them to the merchant, who said in himself, "Unless I take his dirhams, he will not darken my doors." So he pocketed the monies and sold him the mansion, taking witnesses against himself of the sale. Then he arose and set food before Al-Abbas, and they sat down to his good things; after which he brought him dessert and sweetmeats whereof they ate their sufficiency, and when the tables were removed they washed their hands with musked rose-water and willow-water. Then the merchant brought Al-Abbas a napkin scented with the smoke of aloes-wood, on which he wiped his right hand, and said to him, "O my lord, the house is become thy house; so bid thy page transport

thither the horses and arms and stuffs." The Prince did this, and the merchant rejoiced in his neighbourhood and left him not night nor day,[1] so that Al-Abbas said to him, "By the Lord, we distract thee from thy livelihood." He replied, "Allah upon thee, O my lord, name not to me aught of this, or thou wilt break my heart, for the best of traffic art thou and the best of livelihood." So there befell strait friendship between them and all ceremony was laid aside. Meanwhile[2] the king said to his Wazir, "How shall we do in the matter of yonder youth, the Yamáni, on whom we thought to confer gifts, but he hath gifted us with tenfold our largesse and more, and we know not an he be a sojourner with us or not?" Then he went into the Harim and gave the rubies to his wife Afifah, who asked him, "What is the worth of these with thee and with other of the kings?" Quoth he, "They are not to be found save with the greatest of sovrans, nor can any price them with monies." Quoth she, "Whence gottest thou them?" So he recounted to her the story of Al-Abbas from beginning to end, and she said, "By Allah, the claims of honour are imperative on us and the King hath fallen short of his devoir; for that we have not seen him bid the youth to his assembly, nor hath he seated him on his left hand." When the king heard his wife's words, it was as if he had been asleep and awoke; so he went forth the Harim and bade kill poultry and dress meats of every kind and colour. Moreover, he assembled all his courtiers, and let bring sweetmeats and dessert and all that beseemeth the tables of kings. Then he adorned his palace and despatched after Al-Abbas a man of the chief officers of his household, who found him coming forth of the Hammam, clad in a jerkin[3] of fine goats' hair and over it a Baghdádi scarf; his waist was girt with a Rustaki[4] kerchief, and on his head he wore a light turband of Damietta[5] stuff. The messenger wished him joy of the bath and exaggerated in doing him honour: then

1 This most wearisome form of politeness is common in the Moslem world, where men fondly think that the more you see of them the more you like of them. Yet their Proverbial Philosophy ("the wisdom of many and the wit of one") strongly protests against the practice: I have already quoted Mohammed's saying, "Zur ghibban, tazid Hibban"—visits rare keep friendship fair.

2 This clause in the text is evidently misplaced (vol. xii. 144).

3 Arab. Dara' or Dira'=armour, whether of leather or metal; here the coat worn under the mail.

4 Called from Rustak, a quarter of Baghdad. For Rusták town, see vol. v. night dcxxxiv.

5 From Damietta comes our "dimity." The classical name was Tamiáthis, apparently Coptic græcised: the old town on the shore famed in Crusading times was destroyed in A.H. 648=1251.

he said to him, "The king biddeth thee in weal.[1]" "To hear is to obey," quoth Al-Abbas, and accompanied the officer to the king's palace. Now Afifah and her daughter Mariyah were behind the curtain, both looking at him; and when he came before the sovran he saluted him and greeted him with the greeting of kings, whilst all present gazed at him, and at his beauty and loveliness and perfect grace. The king seated him at the head of the table; and when Afifah saw him and considered him straitly, she said, "By the virtue of Mohammed, prince of the Apostles, this youth is of the sons of the kings and cometh not to these parts save for some noble purpose!" Then she looked at Mariyah and saw that her favour was changed, and indeed her eye-balls were as dead in her face, and she turned not her gaze from Al-Abbas a twinkling of the eyes, for that the love of him had sunk deep into her heart. When the queen saw what had befallen her daughter, she feared for her from reproach concerning Al-Abbas; so she shut the casement-wicket that the Princess might not look upon him any more. Now there was a pavilion set apart for Mariyah, and therein were boudoirs and bowers, balconies and lattices, and she had with her a nurse, who served her as is the fashion with the daughters of the Kings. When the banquet was ended and the folk had dispersed, the King said to Al-Abbas, "I would fain have thee abide with me and I will buy thee a mansion, so haply we may requite thee for thy high services; and indeed imperative upon us is thy due and magnified in our eyes is thy work; and soothly we have fallen short of thy deserts in the matter of distance.[2]" When the youth heard the king's speech, he rose and sat down[3] and kissing ground, returned thanks for his bounty and said, "I am the King's thrall, wheresoever I may be, and under his eye." Then he told him the tale of the merchant and the manner of the buying of the house, and the king said, "In very truth I would fain have had thee in my neighbourhood and by side of me." Presently Al-Abbas took leave of the king and went away to his own house. Now it chanced that he passed under the palace of Mariyah, the king's daughter, and she was sitting at a casement. He happened to look round

1 Easterns are always startled by a sudden summons to the presence either of King or Kazi: here the messenger gives the youth to understand that it is in kindness, not in anger.

2 *i.e.*, in not sending for thee to court instead of allowing thee to live in the city without guest-rite.

3 In sign of agitation: the phrase has often been used in this sense, and we find it also in Al-Mas'udi.

and his eyes met those of the Princess, whereupon his wit departed and he was ready to swoon away, whilst his colour changed, and he said, "Verily, we are Allah's and unto Him are we returning!" But he feared for himself lest severance betide him; so he concealed his secret and discovered not his case to any of the creatures of Allah Almighty. When he reached his quarters, his page Anur said to him, "I seek refuge for thee with Allah, O my lord, from change of colour! Hath there betided thee a pain from the Lord of All-might or aught of vexation? In good sooth, sickness hath an end and patience doeth away trouble." But the Prince returned him no answer. Then he brought out ink-case[1] and paper, and wrote these couplets:—

I cry (and mine 's a frame that pines alway), * A mind which fires of passion o'er waylay;
And eyeballs never tasting sweets of sleep; * Yet Fortune spare its cause I ever pray!
While from world-perfidy and parting I * Like Bishr am with Hind,[2] that well-loved may;—
Yea, grown a bye-word 'mid the folk but aye * Spend life unwinning wish or night or day.
"Ah say, wots she my love when her I spied * At the high lattice shedding sunlike ray?"
Her glances keener than the brand when bared * Cleave soul of man nor ever 'scapes her prey:
I looked on her in lattice pierced aloft * When bare her cheat of veil that slipped away;
And shot me thence a shaft my liver pierced * When thrall to care and dire despair I lay.
Knowst thou, O Fawn o' the palace, how for thee * I fared from farness o'er the lands astray?
Then read my writ, dear friends, and show some ruth * To wight who wones black-faced, distraught, sans stay!

And when he ended inditing, he folded up the letter. Now the merchant's wife aforesaid, who was the nurse of the king's daughter, was watching him from a window, unknown of him, and when she saw him writing and reciting, she knew that some rare tale attached to him; so she went in to him and said, "Peace be with thee, O afflicted wight, who acquaintest not leach with thy plight! Verily, thou exposest thy life to grievous blight. I conjure thee by the virtue of Him who hath afflicted thee and with the constraint of love liking hath stricken thee, that thou acquaint

1 I would remind the reader that the "Dawât" (ink-case) contains the reed-pens.

2 Two well-known lovers.

me with thine affair and disclose to me the truth of thy secret; for that indeed I have heard from thee verses which trouble the mind and melt the body." Accordingly he acquainted her with his case and enjoined her to secrecy, whereof she consented, saying, "What shall be the recompense of whoso goeth with thy letter and bringeth thee its reply?" He bowed his head for shame before her and was silent; and she said to him, "Raise thy head and give me thy writ": so he gave her the letter and she bent it and, carrying it to the Princess, said to her, "Take this epistle and give me its answer." Now the dearest of all things to Mariyah was the recitation of poesy and verses, and linked rhymes, and the twanging of lute strings, and she was versed in all tongues; wherefore she took the writ and opening it read that which was therein and understood its purport. Then she threw it to the ground and cried, "O nurse, I have no answer to make to this letter." Quoth the nurse, "Indeed, this is weakness in thee and a reproach to thee, for that the people of the world have heard of thee and commend thee for keenness of wit and understanding; so do thou return him an answer, such as shall trick his heart and tire his soul." Quoth she, "O nurse, who may be the man who presumeth upon me with this correspondence? Haply 'tis the stranger youth who gave my father the rubies." The woman said, "It is himself"; and Mariyah said, "I will answer his letter in such fashion that thou shalt not bring me other than it." Cried the nurse, "So be it.[1]" Thereupon the Princess called for ink-case and paper, and wrote these couplets:—

Thou art bold in the copy thou sentest! May be * 'Twill increase the dule foreign wight must dree!
Thou hast spied me, with glance that bequeaths thee woe * Ah! far is thy hope, a mere foreigner's plea!
Who art thou, poor freke, that wouldst win my love * Wi' thy verse? What seeks thine insanity?
An thou hope for my favours and greed therefor; * Where find thee a leach for such foolish gree?
Then rhyme-linking leave and fool-like be not * Hanged to Cross at the doorway of ignomy!
Deem not that to thee I incline, O youth! * 'Mid the sons of the Path[2] is no place for me.
Thou art homeless waif in the wide wide world; * So return thee home where they keen for thee[3]:

1 On such occasions the old woman (and Easterns are hard de dolo vetularum) always assents to the sayings of her prey, well knowing what the doings will inevitably be.

2 Travellers, Nomads, Wild Arabs.

3 Whither they bear thee back dead with the women crying and keening.

Leave verse-spouting, O thou who a-wold dost wone, * Or minstrel shall name thee in lay and glee:
How many a friend who would meet his love * Is baulked when the goal is right clear to see!
So begone and ne'er grieve for what canst not win * Albe time be near, yet thy grasp 'twill flee.
Now such is my say and the tale I'd tell; * So master my meaning and—fare thee well!

When Mariyah had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who hent it and went with it to Al-Abbas. When she gave it to him he took it and, breaking it open, read it and comprehended its contents; and when he reached the end of it he swooned away. After awhile he came to himself and cried, "Praise be to Allah who hath caused her return a reply to my writ! Canst thou carry her another missive, and with Allah Almighty be thy requital?" Said she, "And what shall letters profit thee, seeing that such is her reply"; but he said, "Peradventure, she may yet be softened." Then he took ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets:—

Reached me the writ and what therein didst write, * Whence grew my pain and bane and blight:
I read the marvel-lines made wax my love * And wore my body out till slightest slight.[1]
Would Heaven ye wot the whole I bear for love * Of you, with vitals clean for you undight!
And all I do t' outdrive you from my thought * 'Vails naught and 'gainst th' obsession loses might:
Couldst for thy lover feel 'twould ease his soul; * E'en thy dear Phantom would his sprite delight!
Then on my weakness lay not coyness-load * Nor in such breach of troth be traitor-wight:
And, weet ye well, for this your land I fared * Hoping to 'joy the union-boon forthright:
How many a stony wold for this I spanned; * How oft I waked when men kept watch o' night!
To fare fro' another land for sight of you * Love bade, while length of way forbade my sprite;
So by His name[2] who molt my frame, have ruth, * And quench the flames thy love in me did light;
Thou fillest, arrayed with glory's robes and rays, * Heaven's stars with joy and Luna with despight.
Then who dare chide or blame me for my love * Of one that can all Beauty's boons unite?

1 Arab. Aznání = emaciated me.
2 Either the Deity or the Love-god.

When Al-Abbas had made an end of his verses, he folded the letter and, delivering it to the nurse, charged her keep the secret. So she took it and, carrying it to Mariyah, gave it to her. The Princess broke it open and read it, and apprehended its purport; then cried she, "By Allah, O nurse, my heart is chagrined with exceeding chagrin, never knew I a sorer, because of this correspondence and of these verses." And the nurse made answer to her, "O my lady, thou art in thy dwelling and thy palace, and thy heart is void of care; so return him a reply and reck not." Accordingly the Princess called for ink-case and paper, and wrote these couplets:—

Ho thou who wouldst vaunt thee of cark and care; * How many love-molten, tryst-craving be there?
And hast wandered the wold in the murks of night * Bound afar and anear on the tracks to fare,
And to eyne hast forbidden the sweets of sleep, * Borne by Devils and Marids to dangerous lair;
And beggest my boons, O in tribe-land[1] homed * And to urge thy wish and desire wouldst dare;
Now, woo Patience fair, an thou bear in mind * What The Ruthful promised to patient prayer[2]!
How many a king for my sake hath vied, * Craving love and in marriage with me to pair.
Al-Nabhán sent, when a-wooing me, * Camels baled with musk and Nadd scenting air.
They brought camphor in boxes and like thereof * Of pearls and rubies that countless were;
Brought pregnant lasses and negro-lads, * Blood steeds and arms and gear rich and rare;—
Brought us raiment of silk and of sendal sheen, * And came courting us but no bride he bare:
Nor could win his wish, for I 'bode content * To part with fau parting and love forswear;
So for me greed not, O thou stranger wight * Lest thou come to ruin and dire despair!

When she had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to Al-Abbas. He broke it open and read it, and comprehended its contents; then took ink-case and paper and wrote these improvised couplets:—

1 Arab "Himà"=the tribal domain, a word which has often occurred.

2 "O ye who believe! seek help through patience and prayer: verily Allah is with the patient." Koran ii. 148. The passage refers to one of the battles, Bedr or Ohod.

Thou hast told me the tale of the kings, and of them * Each was rending lion, a furious foe:
And thou stolest the wits of me, all of them * And shotst me with shaft of thy magic bow:
Thou hast boasted of slaves and of steeds and wealth; * And of beauteous lasses ne'er man did know;
How presents in mighty store didst spurn, * And disdainedst lovers both high and low:
Then I followed their tracks in desire for thee, * With naught save my scymitar keen of blow;
Nor slaves, nor camels that run have I; * Nor slave-girls the litters enveil, ah no!
But grant me union and soon shalt sight * My trenchant blade with the foeman's woe;
Shalt see the horsemen engird Baghdad * Like clouds that wall the whole world below,
Obeying behests which to them I deal * And hearing the words to the foes I throw!
And of negro chattels ten thousand head * Wouldst have, or Kings who be proud and prow,
Or chargers led for thee day by day, * And virgin girls high of bosom, lo!
Al-Yaman land my command doth bear * And my biting blade to my foes I show.
I have left this all for the sake o'thee, * Left Aziz and my kinsmen for evermo'e;
And made Al-Irák making way to thee * Under nightly murks over rocks arow;
When the couriers brought me account of thee * Thy beauty, perfection, and sunny glow,
Then I sent thee verses whose very sound * Burns the heart of shame with a fiery throe;
Yet the world with falsehood hath falsèd me, * Though Fortune was never so false as thou,
Who dubbest me stranger and homeless one * A witless fool and a slave-girl's son!

Then he folded the letter and committed it to the nurse, and gave her five hundred dinars, saying, "Accept this from me, for by Allah thou hast indeed wearied thyself between us." She replied, "By Allah, O my lord, my aim is to bring about foregathering between you, though I lose that which my right hand possesseth." And he said, "May the Lord of All-might requite thee with good!" Then she carried the letter to Mariyah, and said to her, "Take this letter; haply it may be the end of the correspondence." So she took it and, breaking it open, read it, and when she had made an end of it, she

turned to the nurse and said to her, "This one foisteth lies upon me, and asserteth unto me that he hath cities and horsemen and footmen at his command, and submitting to his allegiance; and he wisheth of me that which he shall not win; for thou knowest, O nurse, that kings' sons have sought me in marriage, with presents and rarities; but I have paid no heed unto aught of this; how, then, shall I accept of this fellow, who is the ignoramus of his time, and possesseth naught save two caskets of rubies, which he gave to my sire, and indeed he hath taken up his abode in the house of Al-Ghitrif, and abideth without silver or gold? Wherefore, Allah upon thee, O nurse, return to him and cut off his hope of me." Accordingly the nurse rejoined Al-Abbas without letter or answer; and when she came in to him, he looked at her and saw that she was troubled, and he noted the marks of anger on her face; so he said to her, "What is this plight?" Quoth she, "I cannot set forth to thee that which Mariyah said; for indeed she charged me return to thee without wit or reply." Quoth he, "O nurse of kings, I would have thee carry her this letter and return not to her without it." Then he took ink-case and paper, and wrote these couplets:—

My secret now to men is known though hidden well and true * By me: enough is that I have of love and love of you:
I left familiars, friends, and kin to weep the loss of me * With floods of tears, which like the tide aye flowed and flowed anew:
Then, left my home myself, I bore to Baghdad-town one day, * When parting drave me there his pride and cruelty to rue:
I have indeed drained all the bowl whose draught repression[1] was * Handed by friend who bitter gourd[2] therein for drinking threw.
And, oft as strove I to enjoin the ways of troth and faith, * So often on refusal's path he left my soul to sue.
Indeed my body molten is with care I'm doomèd dree; * And yet I hoped relenting and to win some grace, my due.
But wrong and rigour waxed on me and changed to worse my case; * And love hath left me weeping-eyed for woes that aye pursue.
How long must I keep watch for you throughout the nightly gloom? * How many a path of pining pace and garb of grief endue?
And you, what while you 'joy your sleep, your restful pleasant sleep, * Reck naught of sorrow and of shame that to your friend accrue:
For wakefulness I watched the stars before the peep o' day, * Praying that union with my dear in bliss my soul imbrue;

1 Arab. "Sirr" (a secret), and afterwards "Kitmán" (concealment), *i.e.*, keeping a lover down-hearted.

2 Arab. "'Alkam" = the bitter gourd, colocynth; more usually "Hanzal."

Indeed the throes of long desire laid waste my frame, and I * Rise every morn in weaker plight with hopes e'er fewer few:
"Be not (I say) so hard of heart!" for did you only deign * In phantom guise to visit me 'twere joy enough to view.
But when ye saw my writ ye grudged to me the smallest boon * And cast adown the flag of faith though well my troth ye knew;
Nor aught of answer you vouchsafe, albe you wot full well * The words therein address the heart and pierce the spirit through.
You deemed yourself all too secure for changes of the days * And of the far and near alike you ever careless grew.
Hadst thou (dear maid) been doomed like me to woes, forsure hadst felt * The lowe of love and Lazá-hell which parting doth enmew;
Yet soon shalt suffer torments such as those from thee I bear * And storm of palpitation-pangs in vitals thine shall brew:
Yea, thou shalt taste the bitter smack of charges false and foul, * And public make the privacy best hid from meddling crew;
And he thou lovest shall approve him hard of heart and soul * And heedless of the shifts of Time thy very life undo.
Then hear the fond Salam I send and wish thee every day * While swayeth spray and sparkleth star all good thy life ensue!

When Al-Abbas had made an end of his verses, he folded the scroll and gave it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to Mariyah. When she came into the Princess's presence, she saluted her; but Mariyah returned not her salutation, and she said, "O my lady, how hard is thy heart that thou grudgest to return the salam! Accept this letter, because 'tis the last that shall come to thee from him." Quoth Mariyah, "Take my warning and never again enter my palace, or 'twill be the cause of thy destruction; for I am certified that thou purposest my disgrace. So get thee gone from me." And she bade beat the nurse, who went forth fleeing from her presence, changed of colour and 'wildered of wits, and gave not over going till she came to the house of Al-Abbas. When the Prince saw her in this plight, he became like a sleeper awakened and cried to her, "What hath befallen thee? Acquaint me with thy case." She replied, "Allah upon thee, nevermore send me to Mariyah, and do thou protect me, so the Lord protect thee from the fires of Gehenna!" Then she related to him that which had betided her with Mariyah, which when Al-Abbas heard, there took him the pride and high spirit of the generous, and this was grievous to him. The love of Mariyah fled forth of his heart and he said to the nurse, "How much hadst thou of Mariyah every month?" Quoth she, "Ten dinars," and quoth he, "Be not concerned." Then he put hand to pouch, and bringing out two hundred ducats, gave them to her and said, "Take this wage for a whole

year, and turn not again to serve anyone of the folk. When the twelvemonth shall have passed away, I will give thee a two years' wage, for that thou hast wearied thyself with us and on account of the cutting off the tie which bound thee to Mariyah." Also he gifted her with a complete suit of clothes, and, raising his head to her, said, "When thou toldest me that which Mariyah had done with thee, Allah uprooted the love of her from out my heart, and never again will she occur to my thought; so extolled be He who turneth hearts and eyes! 'Twas she who was the cause of my coming out from Al-Yaman, and now the time is past for which I engaged with my folk, and I fear lest my father levy his forces and ride forth in quest of me, for that he hath no child other than myself, nor can he brook to be parted from me; and in like way 'tis with my mother." When the nurse heard his words, she asked him, "O my lord, and which of the kings is thy sire?" He answered, saying, "My father is Al-Aziz, lord of Al-Yaman, and Nubia and the Islands[1] of the Banu Kahtán, and the Two Sanctuaries[2] (Allah of All-might have them in His keeping!), and whenever he taketh horse, there ride with him an hundred and twenty and four thousand horsemen, each and every smiters with the sword, besides attendants and servants and followers, all of whom give ear to my word and obey my bidding." Asked the nurse, "Why, then, O my lord, didst thou conceal the secret of thy rank and lineage, and passedst thyself off for a foreigner and a wayfarer? Alas for our disgrace before thee by reason of our shortcoming in rendering thee thy due! What shall be our excuse with thee, and thou of the sons of the kings?" But he rejoined, "By Allah, thou hast not fallen short! Indeed, 'tis incumbent on me to requite thee what while I live, though from thee I be far distant." Then he called his man Amir, and said to him, "Saddle the steeds." When the nurse heard his words, and indeed she saw that Amir brought him the horses and they were resolved upon departure, the tears ran down upon her cheeks, and she said to him, "By Allah, thy separation is saddening to me, O coolth of the eye!" Then quoth she, "Where is the goal of thine intent, so we may know thy news and solace ourselves with thy report?" Quoth he, "I go hence to visit 'Akíl, the son of

1 "For Jazírah" = insula, island, used in the sense of "peninsula," see vol. i. p. 2.

2 Meccah and Al-Madinah. Pilgrimage, i. 338 and ii. 57, used in the proverb "Sharr fi al-Haramayn" = wickedness in the two Holy Places.

my paternal uncle, for that he hath his sojourn in the camp of Kundah bin Hishám, and these twenty years have I not seen him nor hath he seen me; so I purpose to repair to him and discover his news and return. Then will I go hence to Al-Yaman, Inshallah!" So saying, he took leave of the nurse and her husband, and set out intending for Akil, the son of his father's brother. Now there was between Baghdad and Akil's abiding-place forty days' journey; so Al-Abbas settled himself on the back of his steed, and his servant Amir mounted also, and they fared forth on their way. Presently, Al-Abbas turned right and left and recited these couplets:—

I'm the singular knight and my peers I slay! * I lay low the foe and his whole array:
I fare me to visit my friend Al-Akil, * And in safety and Allah-lauds[1] shorten the way;
And roll up the width of the wold while still * Hears Amir my word or in earnest or play.[2]
I spring with the spring of a lynx or a pard * Upon whoso dareth our course to stay;
O'erthrow him in ruin and abject shame, * Make him drain the death-cup in fatal fray.
My lance is long with its steely blade; * A brand keen-grided, thin-edged I sway:
With a stroke an it fell on a towering hill * Of the hardest stone, this would cleave in tway:
I lead no troops, nor seek aid save God's, * The creating Lord (to Whom laud alway!)
On Whom I rely in adventures all * And Who pardoneth lâches of freeman and thrall.

Then they fell a-faring night and day, and as they went, behold, they sighted a camp of the camps of the Arabs. So Al-Abbas enquired thereof, and was told that it was the camp of the Banu Zohrah. Now there were around them herds and flocks, such as filled the earth, and they were enemies to Al-Akil, the cousin of Al-Abbas, upon whom they made daily raids and took his cattle, wherefore he used to pay them tribute every year because he lacked power to cope with them. When Al-Abbas came to the skirts of the camp, he dismounted from his destrier, and his servant Amir also dismounted; and they set down the provaunt and ate their sufficiency, and rested an hour of the day. Then said the Prince to his page, "Fetch water from the well and give the

1 Arab. Al-hamd (o li'llah)

2 *i e*, play, such as the chase, or an earnest matter, such as war, etc.

horses to drink, and draw up a supply for us in thy bag,[1] by way of provision for the road." So Amir took the water-skin and made for the well; but when he came there, behold, two young men slaves were leading gazelles, and when they saw him, they said to him, "Whither wendest thou, O youth, and of which of the Arabs art thou?" Quoth he, "Haikye, lads, fill me my water-skin, for that I am a stranger astray and a farer of the way, and I have a comrade who awaiteth me." Quoth the thralls, "Thou art no wayfarer, but a spy from Al-Akil's camp." Then they took him and carried him to their king Zuhayr bin Shabíb; and when he came before him, he said to him, "Of which of the Arabs art thou?" Quoth Amir, "I am a wayfarer." So Zuhayr said, "Whence comest thou and whither wendest thou?" and Amir replied, "I am on my way to Al-Akil." When he named Al-Akil, those who were present were excited; but Zuhayr signed to them with his eyes and asked him, "What is thine errand with Al-Akil?" and he answered, "We would fain see him, my friend and I." As soon as Zuhayr heard his words, he bade smite his neck[2]; but his Wazir said to him, "Slay him not, till his friend be present." So he commanded the two slaves to fetch his friend; whereupon they repaired to Al-Abbas and called to him, saying, "O youth, answer the summons of King Zuhayr." He enquired, "What would the king with me?" and they replied, "We know not." Quoth he, "Who gave the king news of me?" and quoth they, "We went to draw water, and found a man by the well. So we questioned him of his case, but he would not acquaint us therewith, wherefore we carried him willy-nilly to King Zuhayr, who asked him of his adventure, and he told him that he was going to Al-Akil. Now Al-Akil is the king's enemy, and he intendeth to betake himself to his camp and make prize of his offspring, and cut off his traces." Said Al-Abbas, "And what hath Al-Akil done with King Zuhayr?" They replied, "He engaged for himself that he would bring the King every year a thousand dinars and a thousand she-camels,

1 Arab. "Mizwad," or "Mizwád = lit. provision-bag, from Zád = viaticum; afterwards called Kirbah (pron. Girbah, the popular term), and Sakl. The latter is given in the dictionaries as Askálah = scala, échelle, stage, plank

2 Those blood-feuds are most troublesome to the traveller, who may be delayed by them for months: and, until a peace be patched up, he will never be allowed to pass from one tribe to their enemies. A quarrel of the kind prevented my crossing Arabia from Al-Madinah to Maskat (Pilgrimage, ii 297), and another in Africa from visiting the head of the Tanganyika Lake. In all such journeys the traveller who has to fight against Time is almost sure to lose.

besides a thousand head of thoroughbred steeds and two hundred black slaves and fifty hand-maids; but it hath reached the king that Al-Akil purposeth to give naught of this; wherefore he is minded to go to him. So hasten thou with us, ere the King be wroth with thee and with us." Then said Al-Abbas to them, "O youths, sit by my weapons and my stallion till I return." But they said, "By Allah, thou prolongest discourse with that which beseemeth not of words! Make haste, or we will go with thy head, for indeed the King purposeth to slay thee and to slay thy comrade and take that which is with you." When the Prince heard this, his skin bristled with rage, and he cried out at them with a cry which made them tremble. Then he sprang upon his horse and settling himself in the saddle, galloped till he came to the King's assembly, when he shouted at the top of his voice, saying, "To horse, O horsemen!" and couched his spear at the pavilion wherein was Zuhayr. Now there were about the King a thousand smiters with the sword; but Al-Abbas charged home upon them and dispersed them from around him; and there abode none in the tent save Zuhayr and his Wazir. Then Al-Abbas came up to the door of the tent wherein were four-and-twenty golden doves; so he took them, after he had tumbled them down with the end of his lance. Then he called out, saying, "Ho, Zuhayr! Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast abated Al-Akil's repute, but thou art minded to abate that of those who sojourn round about him? Knowest thou not that he is of the lieutenants of Kundah bin Hisham of the Banu Shayban, a man renowned for prowess? Indeed, greed of his gain hath entered into thee, and envy of him hath gotten the mastery of thee. Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast orphaned his children[1] and slain his men? By the virtue of Mustafa, the Chosen Prophet, I will make thee drain the cup of death!" So saying, he bared his brand and smiting Zuhayr on his shoulder-blade caused the steel issue gleaming from his throat tendons; then he smote the Wazir and clove his crown asunder. As he was thus, behold Amir called out to him and said, "O my lord, come help me, or I be a dead man!" So Al-Abbas went up to him guided by his voice, and found him cast down on his back and chained with four chains to four pickets of iron.[2] He loosed his bonds and said to him, "Go in front of me, O Amir." So he fared on

1 *i.e.*, his fighting-men.

2 The popular treatment of a detected horse-thief, for which see Burckhardt, Travels in Arabia (1829), and Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys (1830).

before him a little, and presently they looked, and, behold, horsemen were making to Zuhayr's succour, and they numbered twelve thousand riders led by Sahl bin Ka'ab bestriding a coal-black steed. He charged upon Amir, who fled from him, then upon Al-Abbas, who said, "O Amir, hold fast to my horse and guard my back." The page did as he bade him, whereupon Al-Abbas cried out at the folk, and falling upon them overthrew their braves and slew of them some two thousand riders, whilst not one of them knew what was to do nor with whom he fought. Then said one of them to other, "Verily, the King is slain; so with whom do we wage war? Indeed ye flee from him; but 'twere better ye enter under his banners, or not one of you will be saved." Thereupon all dismounted and, doffing that which was upon them of war-gear, came before Al-Abbas and proffered him allegiance and sued for his protection. So he withheld his brand from them, and bade them gather together the spoils. Then he took the riches and the slaves and the camels, and they all became his lieges and his retainers, to the number (according to that which is reported) of fifty thousand horse. Furthermore, the folk heard of him and flocked to him from all sides; whereupon he divided the loot amongst them and gave largesse, and dwelt thus three days, and there came gifts to him. After this he bade march for Al-Akil's abiding-place; so they fared on six days, and on the seventh they sighted the camp. Al-Abbas bade his man Amir precede him and give Al-Akil the good news of his cousin's coming; so he rode on to the camp and, going in to Al-Akil, acquainted him with the glad tidings of Zuhayr's slaughter and the conquest of his clan.[1] Al-Akil rejoiced in the coming of Al-Abbas and the slaughter of his enemy, and all in his camp rejoiced also and cast robes of honour upon Amir; while Al-Akil bade go forth to meet Al-Abbas, and commanded that none, great or small, freeman or slave, should tarry behind. So they did his bidding and, going forth all, met Al-Abbas at three parasangs' distance from the camp; and when they met him, they dismounted from their horses and Al-Akil and he embraced and clapped palm to palm.[2] Then rejoicing in the coming of Al-Abbas and the killing of their foeman, they returned to the camp, where tents were pitched for the new-comers and skin-rugs spread and game slain and beasts slaughtered and royal guest-meals spread; and after this fashion they abode twenty days in the enjoyment of

1 Arab. "Ashirah": see vol v. night dcxc.
2 Arab. "Musáfahah": see vol. v. night dcxxxiv.

all delight of life. On this wise fared it with Al-Abbas and his cousin Al-Akil; but as regards King Al-Aziz, when his son left him, he was desolated for him with exceeding desolation, both he and his mother; and when tidings of him tarried long and the tryst-time passed without his returning, the king caused public proclamation to be made, commanding all his troops to get ready to mount and ride forth in quest of his son Al-Abbas at the end of three days, after which no cause of hindrance or excuse would be admitted to any. So on the fourth day, the king bade muster the troops, who numbered four-and-twenty thousand horse, besides servants and followers. Accordingly, they reared the standards, and the kettle-drums beat, the general and the king set out with his power intending for Baghdad; nor did he cease to press forward with all diligence till he came within half a day's journey of the city, when he bade his army encamp on the Green Meadow. There they pitched the tents, till the lowland was straitened with them, and set up for the king a pavilion of green brocade, purfled with pearls and precious stones. When Al-Aziz had sat awhile, he summoned the Mamelukes of his son Al-Abbas, and they were five-and-twenty in number besides ten slave-girls, as they were moons, five of whom the king had brought with him and other five he had left with the prince's mother. When the Mamelukes came before him, he cast over each and every of them a mantle of green brocade, and bade them mount similar horses of one and the same fashion, and enter Baghdad and ask after their lord Al-Abbas. So they rode into the city and passed through the market-streets, and there remained in Baghdad, nor old man nor boy but came forth to gaze on them and divert himself with the sight of their beauty and loveliness and the seemliness of their semblance and the goodliness of their garments and horses, for all were even as moons. They gave not over going till they came to the palace,[1] where they halted, and the king looked at them and, seeing their beauty and the brilliancy of their apparel and the brightness of their faces, said, "Would Heaven I knew of which of the tribes these are!" And he bade the Eunuch bring him news of them. The castrato went out to them and questioned them of their case, whereto they replied, "Return to thy lord and enquire of him concerning Prince Al-Abbas, an he have come unto him, for that he left his sire King Al-Aziz a full-told year ago, and indeed longing for him troubleth the King and he hath levied a division of his army and his guards and is come

1 In the text, "to the palace of the king's daughter."

forth in quest of his son, so haply he may light upon tidings of him" Quoth the Eunuch, "Is there amongst you a brother of his or a son?" and quoth they, "Nay, by Allah, but we are all his Mamelukes and the purchased of his money, and his sire Al-Aziz hath sent us to make enquiry of him. Do thou go to thy lord and question him of the Prince, and return to us with that which he shall answer thee." Asked the Eunuch, "And where is King Al-Aziz?" and they answered, "He is encamped in the Green Meadow.[1]" The Eunuch returned and told the king, who said, "Indeed we have been unduly negligent with regard to Al-Abbas. What shall be our excuse with the King? By Allah, my soul suggested to me that the youth was of the sons of the kings!" His wife, the Lady Afifah saw him lamenting for his neglect of Al-Abbas, and said to him, "O King, what is it thou regrettest with this mighty regret?" Quoth he, "Thou knowest the stranger youth, who gifted us with the rubies?" Quoth she, "Assuredly"; and he, "Yonder youths, who have halted in the palace court, are his Mamelukes, and his father, King Al-Aziz, lord of Al-Yaman, hath pitched his camp on the Green Meadow; for he is come with his army to seek him, and the number of his troops is four-and-twenty thousand horsemen." Then he went out from her, and when she heard his words she wept sore for him, and had compassion on his case and sent after him, counselling him to summon the Mamelukes and lodge them in the palace and entertain them. The king hearkened to her rede and despatching the Eunuch for the Mamelukes assigned unto them a lodging and said to them, "Have patience, till the King give you tidings of your lord Al-Abbas." When they heard his words, their eyes ran over with a rush of tears, of their mighty longing for the sight of their lord. Then the King bade the Queen enter the private chamber opening upon the throne-room, and let down the curtain before the door so she might see and not be seen. She did this, and he summoned them to his presence; and, when they stood before him, they kissed ground to do him honour, and showed forth their courtly breeding and magnified his dignity. He ordered them to sit, but they refused, till he conjured them by their lord Al-Abbas: accordingly they sat down, and he bade set before them food of various kinds and fruits and sweetmeats. Now within the Lady Afifah's palace was a souterrain com-

1 Arab. "Marj Sali'" = cleft meadow (here and below). Mr. Payne suggests that this may be a mistranscription for Marj Sali' (with a Sád) = a treeless champaign. It appears to me a careless blunder for the Marj akhzar (green meadow) before mentioned.

municating with the Princess Mariyah: so the Queen sent after her and she came to her, whereupon she made her stand behind the curtain and gave her to know that Al-Abbas was son to the King of Al-Yaman, and that these were his Mamelukes: she also told her that the Prince's father had levied his troops and was come with his army in quest of him, and that he had pitched his camp on the Green Meadow, and had despatched these Mamelukes to make enquiry of their lord. Then Mariyah abode looking upon them and upon their beauty and loveliness and the goodliness of their raiment, till they had eaten their fill of food and the tables were removed; whereupon the King recounted to them the story of Al-Abbas, and they took leave of him and went their ways. So fortuned it with the Mamelukes; but as for the Princess Mariyah, when she returned to her palace, she bethought herself concerning the affair of Al-Abbas, repenting her of what she had done; and the love of him took root in her heart. And, when the night darkened upon her, she dismissed all her women and bringing out the letters, to wit, those which Al-Abbas had written her, fell to reading them and weeping. She left not weeping her night long, and when she arose in the morning she called a damsel of her slave-girls, Shafikah by name, and said to her, "O damsel, I purpose to discover to thee mine affair and I charge thee keep my secret, which is that thou betake thyself to the house of the nurse, who used to serve me, and fetch her to me, for that I have grave need of her." Accordingly, Shafikah went out and repairing to the nurse's house, entered and found her clad in clothing other and richer than what she had whilome been wont to wear. So she saluted her and asked her, "Whence hadst thou this dress, than which there is no goodlier?" Answered the nurse, "O Shafikah, thou deemest that I have seen no good save of thy mistress; but, by Allah, had I endeavoured for her destruction, I had acted righteously, seeing that she did with me what she did and bade the Eunuch beat me, without offence by me offered: so tell her that he, on whose behalf I bestirred myself with her, hath made me independent of her and her humours, for he hath habited me in this habit and given me two hundred and fifty dinars and promised me the like every year and charged me to serve none of the folk." Quoth Shafikah, "My mistress hath a need for thee; so come thou with me and I will engage to restore thee to thy dwelling in safety and satisfaction." But quoth the nurse, "Indeed, her palace is become unlawful and forbidden to

me[1] and never again will I enter therein, for that Allah (extolled and exalted be He !) of His favour and bounty hath rendered me independent of her." Presently Shafikah returned to her mistress and acquainted her with the nurse's words, and that wherein she was of prosperity; whereupon Mariyah confessed her unmannerly dealing with her, and repented when repentance profited her not; and she abode in that her case days and nights, whilst the fire of longing flamed in her heart. On this wise happened it to her; but as regards Al-Abbas he tarried with his cousin Al-Akil twenty days, after which he made ready for the journey to Baghdad and, bidding bring the booty he had taken from King Zuhayr, divided it between himself and his cousin. Then he sent out a-marching Baghdad-wards, and when he came within two days' journey of the city he summoned his servant Amir, and said to him, "Mount thy charger and forego me with the caravan and the cattle." So Amir took horse and fared on till he came to Baghdad, and the season of his entering was the first of the day; nor was there in the city little child or old greybeard but came forth to divert himself with gazing on those flocks and herds, and upon the beauty of those slave-girls; and their wits were wildered at what they saw. Soon afterwards the news reached the king that the young man Al-Abbas, who had gone forth from him, was come back with booty and rarities and black slaves and a conquering host, and had taken up his sojourn without the city, whilst his servant Amir was presently come to Baghdad, so he might get ready for his lord dwelling-places wherein he should take up his abode. When the King heard these tidings of Amir, he sent for him and caused bring him before him; and when he entered his presence, he kissed the ground and saluted with the salam and showed his fine breeding and greeted him with the goodliest of greetings. The King bade him raise his head and, this done, questioned him of his lord Al-Abbas; whereupon he acquainted him with his adventures and told him that which had betided him with King Zuhayr and of the army that was become at his command and of the spoil he had secured. He also gave him to know that Al-Abbas was to arrive on the morrow, and with him more than fifty thousand cavaliers, obedient to his orders. When the king heard his words, he bade decorate Baghdad and commanded the citizens to equip themselves with the richest of their apparel, in honour of the coming of Al-Abbas. Furthermore, he sent to give King Al-Aziz the glad

1 The palace, even without especial and personal reasons, not being the place for a religious and scrupulous woman.

tidings of his son's return, and informed him of all which he had heard from the Prince's servant. When the news reached King Al-Aziz, he joyed with exceeding joy in the approach of his son, and straightway took horse, he and all his host, while the trumpets blared and the musicians played, so that the earth quaked and Baghdad also trembled, and it was a notable day. When Mariyah beheld all this, she repented in all possible penitence of that which she had done against Al-Abbas, and the fires of desire raged in her vitals. Meanwhile, the troops[1] sallied forth of Baghdad and went out to meet those of Al-Abbas, who had halted in a garth called the Green Island. When he espied the approaching host, he strained his sight, and, seeing horsemen coming and troops and footmen he knew not, said to those about him, "Among yonder troops are flags and banners of various kinds; but as for the great green standard that ye see, 'tis the standard of my sire, the which is reserved to him and never displayed save over his head, and thus I know that he himself is come out in quest of me." And he was certified of this, he and his troops. So he fared on towards them and when he drew near them, he knew them and they knew him; whereupon they lighted down from their horses, and saluting him gave him joy of his safety and the folk flocked to him. When he came to his father, they embraced and each greeted other a long time, whilst neither of them could utter a word, for the greatness of that which betided them of joy in reunion. Then Al-Abbas bade the folk take horse; so they mounted, and his Mamelukes surrounded him, and they entered Baghdad on the most splendid wise and in the highest honour and glory. Now the wife of the shopkeeper, that is, the nurse, came out, with the rest of those who flocked forth, to divert herself with gazing upon the show, and when she saw Al-Abbas and beheld his beauty and the beauty of his host, and that which he had brought back with him of herds and slave-girls, Mamelukes and negroes, she improvised and recited these couplets:—

Al-Abbás from the side of Akíl is come; * Caravans and steeds he hath plunderèd:
Yea; horses he brought of pure blood, whose necks * Ring with collars like anklets where'er they are led.
With domèd hoofs they pour torrent-like, * As they prance through dust on the level stead:

1 *i.e.*, "those of El Aziz, who had apparently entered the city or passed through it on their way to the camp of El Abbas." This is Mr. Payne's suggestion.

And bestriding their saddles come men of war, * Whose fingers play on the kettle-drum's head:
And couched are their lances that bear the points * Keen grided, which fill every soul with dread:
Who wi' them would fence draweth down his death * For one deadly lunge soon shall do him dead:
Charge, comrades, charge ye and give me joy, * Saying, "Welcome to thee, O our dear comràde!"
And who joys at his meeting shall 'joy delight * Of large gifts when he from his steed shall 'light.

When the troops entered Baghdad, each of them alighted in his tent, whilst Al-Abbas encamped apart on a place near the Tigris and issued orders to slaughter for the soldiers, each day, that which should suffice them of oxen and sheep and to bake them bread and spread the tables: so the folk ceased not to come to him and eat of his banquet. Furthermore, all the country-people flocked to him with presents and rarities, and he requited them many times the like of their gifts, so that the lands were filled with his renown and the fame of him was bruited abroad among the habitants of wold and town. Then, as soon as he rode to the house he had bought, the shopkeeper and his wife came to him and gave him joy of his safety; whereupon he ordered them three head of swift steeds and thoroughbred, and ten dromedaries and an hundred head of sheep, and clad them both in costly robes of honour. Presently he chose out ten slave-girls and ten negro slaves, and fifty mares and the like number of she-camels, and three hundred of sheep, together with twenty ounces of musk and as many of camphor, and sent all this to the King of Baghdad. When the present came to Ins bin Kays his wit fled for joy, and he was perplexed wherewith to requite him. Al-Abbas also gave gifts and largesse and bestowed robes of honour upon noble and simple, each after the measure of his degree, save only Mariyah; for to her, indeed, he sent nothing. This was grievous to the Princess, and it irked her sore that he should not remember her; so she called her slave-girl Shafikah and said to her, "Hie thee to Al-Abbas and salute him, and say to him:—What hindereth thee from sending my lady Mariyah her part of thy booty?" So Shafikah betook herself to him, and when she came to his door the chamberlains refused her admission until they should have got for her leave and permission. When she entered, Al-Abbas knew her, and knew that she had somewhat of speech with him; so he dismissed his Mamelukes and asked her, "What is thine errand, O

hand-maid of good?" Answered she, "O my lord, I am a slave-girl of the Princess Mariyah, who kisseth thy hands and offereth her salutation to thee. Indeed, she rejoiceth in thy safety, and blameth thee for that thou breakest her heart, alone of all the folk, because thy largesse embraceth great and small, yet hast thou not remembered her with anything of thy plunder, as if thou hadst hardened thy heart against her." Quoth he, "Extolled be He who turneth hearts! By Allah, my vitals were consumed with the love of her; and of my longing after her I came forth to her from my mother-land, and left my people and my home and my wealth, and it was with her that began the hardheartedness and the cruelty. Natheless, for all this I bear her no malice, and there is no help but that I send her somewhat whereby she may remember me; for that I sojourn in her country but a few days, after which I set out for the land of Al-Yaman." Then he called for a chest, and thence bringing out a necklace of Greek workmanship, worth a thousand dinars, wrapped it in a mantle of Greek silk, set with pearls and gems, and purfled with red gold, and joined thereto a couple of caskets containing musk and ambergris. He also put off upon the girl a mantle of Greek silk, striped with gold, wherein were divers figures and portraitures depicted, never saw eyes its like. Therewithal the girl's wit fled for joy, and she went forth from his presence and returned to her mistress. When she came in to her, she acquainted her with that which she had seen of Al-Abbas, and that which was with him of servants and attendants, and set out to her the loftiness of his station and gave her that which was with her. Mariyah opened the mantle, and when she saw that necklace (and, indeed, the place was illumined with the lustre thereof), she looked at her slave-girl and said to her, "By Allah, O Shafikah, one look at him were dearer to me than all that my hand possesseth! Oh, would Heaven I knew what I shall do, when Baghdad is empty of him and I hear of him no news!" Then she wept, and calling for ink-case and paper and pen of brass wrote these couplets:—

Longsome my sorrows are; my liver's fired with ecstasy; * And severance-shaft hath shot me through whence sorest pangs I dree:
And howso could my soul forget the love I bear to you? * You-wards my will perforce returns nor passion sets me free:
I 'prison all desires I feel for fear of spies thereon * Yet tears that streak my cheek betray for every eye to see.
No place of rest or joy I find to bring me life-delight; * No wine tastes well, nor viands please however savoury:

Ah me! to whom shall I complain of case and seek its cure * Save unto thee whose Phantom deigns to show me sight of thee?
Then name me not or chide for aught I did in passion-stress, * With vitals gone and frame consumed by yearning-malady!
Secret I keep the fire of love which aye for severance burns; Sworn slave[1] to Love who robs my rest and wakes me cruelly:
And ceaseth not my thought to gaze upon your ghost by night, * Which falsing comes and he I love still, still unloveth me.
Would Heaven ye wist the blight that I for you am doomed to bear * For love of you, which tortures me with parting agony!
Then read between the lines I wrote, and mark and learn their sense * For such my tale, and Destiny made me an outcast be:
Learn eke the circumstance of Love and lover's woe nor deign * Divulge its mysteries to men nor grudge its secrecy.

Then she folded the scroll and, giving it to her slave-girl, bade her bear it to Al-Abbas and bring back his reply. So Shafikah took the letter and carried it to the Prince, after the doorkeeper had sought leave of him to admit her. When she came in to him, she found him with five damsels, as they were moons, clad in rich raiment and ornaments; and when he saw her, he said to her, "What is thy need, O hand-maid of good?" Presently she put out her hand to him with the writ, after she had kissed it, and he bade one of his slave-girls receive it from her.[2] Then he took it from the girl and, breaking the seal, read it and comprehended its contents; whereupon he cried, "Verily, we be Allah's and unto Him we shall return!" and calling for ink-case and paper wrote these improvised couplets:—

I wonder seeing how thy love to me * Inclined, while I in heart from love declined:
Eke wast thou wont to say in verseful writ, * "Son of the Road[3] no road to me shall find!
How oft kings flocked to me with mighty men * And bales on back of Bukhti[4] beast they bind:
And noble steeds of purest blood and all * They bore of choicest boons to me consigned;
Yet won no favour!" Then came I to woo, * And the long tale o' love I had designed.
I fain set forth in writ of mine, with words * Like strings of pearls in goodly line aligned:—
Set forth my sev'rance, griefs, tyrannic wrongs, * And ill device ill-suiting lover-kind.

1 Arab. "Hatif", gen. = an ally.
2 Not wishing to touch the hand of a strange woman.
3 *i.e.*, a mere passer-by, a stranger; alluding to her taunt.
4 The Bactrian or double-humped dromedary. See vol. ii. night cxl. Al-Mas'udi (vii 169) calls it "Jamal fálij," lit = the palsy-camel.

How oft love-claimant, craving secrecy, * How oft have lovers 'plained as sore they pined,
"How many a brimming bitter cup I've quaffed, * And wept my woes when speech was vain as wind!"
And thou:—"Be patient, 'tis thy bestest course * And choicest medicine for mortal mind!"
Then unto patience worthy praise cleave *thou;* * Easy of issue and be lief resigned:
Nor hope thou aught of me lest ill alloy * Or aught of dross affect my blood refined:
Such is my speech. Read, mark, and learn my say! * To what thou deemest ne'er I'll tread the way.

Then he folded the scroll and sealing it, entrusted it to the damsel, who took it and bore it to her mistress. When the Princess read the letter and mastered its meaning, she said, "Meseemeth he recalleth bygones to me." Then she called for pens, ink, and paper, and wrote these couplets:—

Love thou didst show me till I learnt its woe * Then to the growth of grief didst severance show:
I banisht joys of slumber after you * And e'en my pillow garred my wake to grow.
How long in parting shall I pine with pain * While severance-spies[1] through night watch every throe?
I've left my kingly couch and self withdrew * Therefrom, and taught mine eyelids sleep t' unknow:
'Twas thou didst teach me what I ne'er can bear: * Then didst thou waste my frame with parting-blow.
By oath I swear thee, blame and chide me not; * Be kind to mourner Love hath stricken low!
For parting-rigours drive him nearer still * To narrow home, ere clad in shroud for clo':
Have ruth on me, since Love laid waste my frame, *'Mid thralls enrolled me and lit fires that flame.

Mariyah rolled up the letter and gave it to Shafikah, bidding her bear it to Al-Abbas. Accordingly, she took it and going with it to his door proceeded to enter; but the chamberlains and serving-men forbade her till they had obtained her leave from the Prince. When she went into him, she found him sitting in the midst of the five damsels before mentioned, whom his father had brought for him; so she gave him the letter and he tare it open and read it. Then he bade one of the damsels, whose name was Khafifah and who came from the land of China, tune her lute

1 *i.e.*, stars and planets.

and sing anent separation. Thereupon she came forward and tuning her lute, played thereon in four-and-twenty modes: after which she returned to the first and sang these couplets:—

Our friends, when leaving us on parting-day, * Drave us in wolds of severance-grief to stray:
When bound the camels' litters bearing them, * And cries of drivers urged them on the way,
Outrusht my tears, despair gat hold of me * And sleep betrayed mine eyes to wake a prey.
The day they went I wept, but showed no ruth * The severance-spy and flared the flames alwày:
Alas for lowe o' Love that fires me still! * Alack for pine that melts my heart away!
To whom shall I complain of care, when thou * Art gone, nor fain a-pillow head I lay?
And day by day Love's ardours grow on me, * And far's the tent that holds my fondest may:
O Breeze o' Heaven, bear for me a charge * (Nor traitor-like my troth in love betray!),
Whene'er thou breathest o'er the loved one's land * Greet him with choice salam fro' me, I pray:
Dust him with musk and powdered ambergris * While time endures! Such is my wish for aye.

When the damsel had made an end of her song, Al-Abbas swooned away and they sprinkled on him musked rose-water, till he recovered from his fainting-fit, when he called another damsel (now there was on her of linen and raiment and ornaments that which undoeth description, and she was a model of beauty and brightness and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, such as shamed the crescent moon, and she was a Turkish girl from the land of the Roum and her name was Háfizah) and said to her, "O Hafizah, close thine eyes and tune thy lute and sing to us upon the days of severance." She answered him, "To hear is to obey," and taking the lute tightened its strings, and cried out from her head,[1] in a plaintive voice, and sang these couplets:—

My friends! tears flow in painful mockery, * And sick my heart from parting agony:
My frame is wasted and my vitals wrung * And love-fires grow and eyes set tear-floods free:
And when the fire burns high beneath my ribs * With tears I quench it as sad day I see.
Love left me wasted, baffled, pain be-gone, * Sore frighted, butt to spying enemy:

1 *i.e.*, sang in tenor tones which are always in falsetto.

When I recall sweet union wi' their loves * I chase dear sleep from the sick frame o' me.
Long as our parting lasts the rival joys, * And spies with fearful prudence gain their gree.
I fear me for my sickly, langourous frame * Lest dread of parting slay me incont'nently.

When Hafizah had ended her song, Al-Abbas cried to her, "Brava! Verily, thou quickenest hearts from griefs." Then he called another maiden of the daughters of Daylam, by name Marjánah, and said to her, "O Marjanah, sing to me upon the days of parting." She said, "Hearing and obeying," and recited these couplets:—

"Cleave to fair Patience! Patience 'gendereth weal": * Such is the rede to us all sages deal:
How oft I plained the lowe of grief and love * Mid passions cast my soul in sore unheal.
How oft I waked and drained the bitter cup * And watched the stars, nor sleep mine eyes would seal!
Enough it were an deal you grace to me * In writ a-morn and garred no hope to feel.
But Thoughts which probed its depths would scar my heart * And start from eye-brows streams that ever steel:
Nor cease I suffering baleful doom and nights * Wakeful, and heart by sorrows rent piece-meal:
But Allah purged my soul from love of you * When all knew secrets cared I not reveal.
I march to-morrow from your country, and * Haply you'll speed me nor fear aught unweal;
And, when in person you be far from us, * Would heaven we knew who shall your news reveal.
Who kens if home will e'er us two contain * In dearest life with union naught can stain!

When Marjanah had made an end of her song, the Prince said to her, "Brava, O damsel! Indeed, thou sayest a thing which had occurred to my mind and my tongue was near to speaking it." Then he signed to the fourth damsel, who was a Cairene, by name Sitt al-Husn, and bade her tune her lute and sing to him upon the same theme. So the Lady of Beauty tuned her lute and sang these couplets:—

Patience is blest for weal comes after woe * And all things stated time and ordinance show;
Haps the Sultan, hight Fortune, prove unjust * Shifting the times, and man excuse shall know:
Bitter ensueth sweet in law of change * And after crookedness things straightest grow

Then guard thine honour, nor to any save * The noble, knowledge of the hid bestow:
These be vicissitudes the Lord commands * Poor men endure, the sinner and the low.

When Al-Abbas heard her make an end of her verses, they pleased him and he said to her, "Brava, O Sitt al-Husn! Indeed, thou hast done away anxiety from my heart, and hast banished the things which had occurred to my thought." Then he sighed and signing to the fifth damsel, who was from the land of the Persians, and whose name was Marzíyah (now she was the fairest of them all and the sweetest of speech and she was like unto a lustrous star, a model of beauty and loveliness and perfection and brightness and justness of shape and symmetric grace, and had a face like the new moon, and eyes as they were gazelle's eyes), and said to her, "O Marziyah, come forward and tune thy lute and sing to us on the same theme, for indeed we are resolved upon faring to the land of Al-Yaman." Now this maiden had met many of the monarchs and had foregathered with the great; so she tuned her lute and sang these couplets:—

Friend of my heart, why leave thou lone and desolate these eyne? * Fair union of our lots ne'er failed this sitting-stead of mine!
And ah! who dwellest singly in the heart and sprite of me, * (Be I thy ransom!) desolate for loss of friend I pine!
By Allah! O thou richest form in charms and loveliness, * Give alms to lover who can show of patience ne'er a sign!
Alms of what past between us tway (which ne'er will I divulge) * Of privacy between us tway that man shall ne'er divine:
Grant me approval of my lord whereby t' o'erwhelm the foe, * And let my straitness pass away and doubtful thoughts malign:
Approof of thee (an gained the meed) for me high rank shall gain * And show me robed in richest weed to eyes of envy fain.

When she had ended her song, all who were in the assembly wept for the daintiness of her delivery and the sweetness of her speech, and Al-Abbas said to her, "Brava, O Marziyah! Indeed, thou bewilderest the wits with the beauty of thy verse and the polish of thy speech.[1]" All this while Shafikah abode gazing upon her, and when she beheld the slave-girls of Al-Abbas and considered the charms of their clothing and the subtlety of their senses and the delicacy of their delivery, her reason flew from her head. Then she sought leave of Al-Abbas and, returning to her mistress Mariyah, sans letter or reply, acquainted her with what

1 Arab. Tahzíb = reforming morals, amending conduct, chastening style.

she had espied of the damsels, and described to her the condition wherein he was of honour and delight, majesty, venerance and loftiness of rank. Lastly, she enlarged upon what she had seen of the slave-girls and their case, and that which they had said, and how they had incited Al-Abbas anent returning to his own country by the recitation of songs to the sound of the strings. When the Princess heard this her slave-girl's report, she wept and wailed and was like to leave the world. Then she took to her pillow and said, "O Shafikah, I will inform thee of a something which is not hidden from Allah the Most High, and 'tis that thou watch over me till the Almighty decree the accomplishment of His destiny, and when my days are ended take thou the necklace and the mantle with which Al-Abbas gifted me and return them to him. I deem not he will survive me, and if the Lord of All-might determine against him and his days come to an end, do thou give one charge to shroud us and entomb us both in one tomb." Then her case changed and her colour waxed wan; and when Shafikah saw her mistress in this plight, she repaired to her mother and told her that the lady Mariyah refused meat and drink. Asked the Queen, "Since when hath this befallen her?" and Shafikah answered, "Since yesterday's date"; whereat the mother was confounded and, betaking herself to her daughter that she might enquire into her case, lo and behold! found her as one dying. So she sat down at her head and Mariyah opened her eyes, and seeing her mother sitting by her, sat up for shame before her. The Queen questioned her of her case and she said, "I entered the Hamman and it stupefied me, and prostrated me, and left in my head an exceeding pain; but I trust in Allah Almighty that it will cease." When her mother went out from her, Mariyah took to chiding the damsel for that which she had done, and said to her, "Verily, death were dearer to me than this; so discover thou not my affair to any, and I charge thee return not to the like of this fashion." Then she fainted and lay swooning for a whole hour, and when she came to herself she saw Shafikah weeping over her; whereupon she pluckt the necklace from her neck and the mantle from her body, and said to the damsel, "Lay them in a damask napkin and bear them to Al-Abbas, and acquaint him with that wherein I am for the stress of severance and the strain of forbiddance." So Shafikah took them and carried them to Al-Abbas, whom she found in readiness to depart, being about to take horse for Al-Yaman. She went in to him and gave him the napkin and that which was therein, and when he opened it and saw what it contained, namely, the mantle and the necklace, his chagrin was excessive and his eyes turned in

his head[1] and his rage shot out of them. When Shafikah saw that which betided him, she came forward and said to him, "O bountiful lord, verily my mistress returneth not the mantle and the necklace for despite; but she is about to quit the world and thou hast the best right to them." Asked he, "And what is the cause of this?" and Shafikah answered, "Thou knowest. By Allah, never among the Arabs nor the Ajams, nor among the sons of the kings, saw I a harder of heart than thou! Can it be a slight matter to thee that thou troublest Mariyah's life, and causest her to mourn for herself and quit the world for the sake of thy youth[2]? Thou wast the cause of her acquaintance with thee and now she departeth this life on thine account, she whose like Allah Almighty hath not created among the daughters of the kings." When Al-Abbas heard from the damsel these words, his heart burned for Mariyah, and her case was not light to him; so he said to Shafikah, "Canst thou bring me in company with her, so haply I may discover her concern and allay whatso aileth her?" Said she, "Yes, I can do that, and thine will be the bounty and the favour." So he arose and followed her, and she preceded him, till they came to the palace. Then she opened and locked behind them four-and-twenty doors and made them fast with padlocks; and when he came to Mariyah he found her as she were the downing sun, strown upon a Táif rug of perfumed leather,[3] surrounded by cushions stuffed with ostrich down, and not a limb of her quivered. When her maid saw her in this state, she offered to cry out; but Al-Abbas said to her, "Do it not, but have patience till we discover her affair; and if Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) have decreed her death, wait till thou have opened the doors to me and I have gone forth. Then do what seemeth good to thee." So saying, he went up to the Princess and, laying his hand upon her bosom, found her heart fluttering like a doveling and the life yet hanging to her breast.[4] So he placed his hand on her cheek, whereat she opened her eyes and, beckoning to her maid, said to her by signs, "Who is this that treadeth my carpet and transgresseth against me[5]?" "O my lady," cried Shafikah, "this is Prince Al-Abbas, for whose sake thou forsakest the world." When Mariyah heard speak of Al-Abbas, she raised her hand from under the coverlet and, laying it

1 *i.e.*, so as to show only the whites, as happens to the "mesmerised."
2 *i.e.*, for love of and longing for thy youth.
3 *i.e.*, leather from Al-Táif; see vol. vi night dcccIxxiv. The text has by mistake, Táhfi.
4 *i.e.*, she was at her last breath, when cured by the magic of love.
5 *i.e.*, violateth my private apartment.

upon his neck, inhaled awhile his scent. Then she sat up and her complexion returned to her and they abode talking till a third part of the night was past. Presently, the Princess turned to her handmaid and bade her fetch them somewhat of food, sweetmeats, and fruits, fresh and dry. So Shafikah brought what she desired, and they ate and drank and abode on this wise without lewdness, till night went and light came. Then said Al-Abbas, "Indeed, the morn breaketh. Shall I hie to my sire and bid him go to thy father and seek thee of him in wedlock for me, in accordance with the book of Allah Almighty and the practice of His Apostle (whom may He save and assain!) so we may not enter into transgression?" And Mariyah answered, saying, "By Allah, 'tis well counselled of thee!" So he went away to his lodging and naught befell between them; and when the day lightened, she recited these couplets:—

O friends, morn-breeze with Morn draws on amain: * A voice[1] bespeaks us, gladding us with 'plain.
Up to the convent where our friend we'll sight * And wine more subtile than the dust[2] we'll drain;
Whereon our friend spent all the coin he owned, * And made the nursling in his cloak contain[3];
And, when we oped the jar, light opalline * Struck down the singers in its search waylain.
From all sides flocking came the convent-monks * Crying at top o' voices, "Welcome fain!"
And we carousing sat, and cups went round, * Till rose the Venus-star o'er Eastern plain.
No shame in drinking wine, which means good cheer * And love and promise of prophetic strain[4]!
Ho thou, the Morn, our union sundering, * These joyous hours to find thou dost constrain.
Show grace to us until our pleasures end, * And latest drop of joy fro' friends we gain:
You have affection candid and sincere * And Love and Joy are best of Faiths for men.

Such was the case with Mariyah; but as regards Al-Abbas, he betook himself to his father's camp, which was pitched on the Green Meadow, by the Tigris-side, and none might thread

1 The voice (Sházz) is left doubtful: it may be girl's, nightingale's, or dove's.

2 Arab. "Hibá," partly induced by the rhyme. In desert countries the comparison will be appreciated; in Sind the fine dust penetrates into a closed book.

3 *i.e.*, he smuggled it in under his 'Abá-cloak.

4 *i.e.*, the delights of Paradise promised by the Prophet.

his way between the tents, for the dense network of the tent-ropes. When the Prince reached the first of the pavilions, the guards and servants came out to meet him from all sides, and walked in his service till he drew near the sitting-place of his sire, who knew of his approach. So he issued forth his marquee and, coming to meet his son, kissed him and made much of him. Then they returned together to the royal pavilion, and when they had seated themselves therein and the guards had taken up their station in attendance on them, the King said to Al-Abbas, "O my son, get ready thine affair, so we may go to our own land, for that the lieges in our absence are become as they were sheep lacking shepherd." Al-Abbas looked at his father and wept till he fainted, and when he recovered from his fit he improvised and recited these couplets:—

I embraced him,[1] and straight I waxt drunk wi' the smell * Of a fresh young branch wont in wealth to dwell.
Yea, drunken, but not by the wine; nay, 'twas * By draughts from his lips that like wine-cups well:
For Beauty wrote on his cheek's fair page * "Oh, his charms! take refuge fro' danger fell[2]!"
Mine eyes, be easy, since him ye saw; * Nor mote nor blearness with you shall mell:
In him Beauty showeth fro' first to fine, * And bindeth on hearts bonds unfrangible:
An thou kohl thyself with his cheek of light * Thou'll find but jasper and or in stelle[3]:
The chiders came to reproach me when * For him longing and pining my heart befell:
But I fear not, I end not, I turn me not * From his life, let tell-tale his tale e'en tell:
By Allah, forgetting ne'er crossed my thought * While by life-tie bound, or when ends my spell:
An I live I will live in his love, an I die * Of love and longing, I'll cry, "'Tis well!"

Now when Al-Abbas had ended his verses, his father said to him, "I seek refuge for thee with Allah, O my son! Hast thou any want thou art powerless to win, so I may endeavour for thee therein and lavish my treasures in its quest?" Cried Al-Abbas, "O my papa, I have indeed an urgent need, on whose account

1 Again, "he" for "she," making the lover's address more courtly and delicate.

2 *i.e.*, take refuge with Allah from the evil eye of her charms.

3 *i.e.*, an thou prank or adorn thyself: I have translated literally, but the couplet strongly suggests "nonsense verses."

I came forth of my mother-land and left my people and my home, and affronted perils and horrors and became an exile, and I trust in Allah that it may be accomplished by thy magnanimous endeavour." Quoth the King, "And what is thy want?" and quoth Al-Abbas, "I would have thee go and ask for me to wife Mariyah, daughter of the King of Baghdad, for that my heart is distracted with love of her." Then he recounted to his father his adventure from first to last. When the King heard this from his son, he rose to his feet and, calling for his charger of parade, took horse with four-and-twenty Emirs of the chief officers of his empire. Then he betook himself to the palace of the King of Baghdad who, when he saw him coming, bade his chamberlains open the doors to them, and going down himself to meet him received him with all honour and hospitality, and carried him and his into the palace; then causing make ready for them carpets and cushions, sat down upon his golden throne and seated the guest by his side upon a chair of gold, framed in juniper-wood set with pearls and jewels. Presently he bade bring sweetmeats and confections and scents, and commanded to slaughter four-and-twenty head of sheep and the like of oxen, and make ready geese and chickens and pigeons stuffed and boiled, and spread the tables; nor was it long before the meats were served up in vessels of gold and silver. So they ate their sufficiency, and when they had eaten their fill, the tables were removed and the wine-service set on and the cups and flagons ranged in ranks, whilst the Mamelukes and the fair slave-girls sat down with zones of gold about their waists, studded with all manner pearls, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and other jewels. Moreover, the king bade fetch the musicians; so there presented themselves before him twenty damsels with lutes and psalteries[1] and viols, and smote upon instruments of music playing and performing on such wise that they moved the assembly to delight. Then said Al-Aziz to the King of Baghdad, "I would fain speak a word to thee; but do thou not exclude from us those who are present. An thou consent unto my wish thine is ours and on thee shall be whatso is on us[2]; and we will be to thee a mighty forearm against all unfriends and foes."

1 Arab. "Santír": Lane (M. E., chapt xviii.) describes it as resembling the Kanún (dulcimer or zither) but with two oblique peg-pieces instead of one, and double chords of wire (not treble strings of lamb's gut), and played upon with two sticks instead of the little plectra. Dozy also gives Santir from *ψαλτήριον*, the Fsaltrún of Daniel.

2 *i.e.*, that which is ours shall be thine, and that which is incumbent on thee shall be incumbent on us=we will assume thy debts and responsibilities.

Quoth Ins bin Kays, "Say what thou wilt, O King, for indeed thou excellest in speech and in whatso thou sayest dost hit the mark." So Al-Aziz said to him, "I desire that thou marry thy daughter Mariyah to my son Al-Abbas, for thou knowest what he hath of beauty and loveliness, brightness and perfect grace, and his frequentation of the valiant and his constancy in the stead of cut-and-thrust." Said Ins bin Kays, "By Allah, O King, of my love for Mariyah, I have appointed her mistress of her own hand; accordingly, whomsoever she chooseth of the folk to him will I wed her." Then he arose to his feet and going in to his daughter, found her mother with her; so he set out to them the case and Mariyah said, "O my papa, my wish followeth thy word and my will ensueth thy will; so whatsoever thou choosest I am obedient to thee and under thy dominion." Therewith the King knew that Mariyah inclined to Al-Abbas; he therefore returned forthright to King Al-Aziz and said to him, "May Allah amend the King! Verily, the wish is won and there is no opposition to that thou commandest." Quoth Al-Aziz, "By Allah's leave are wishes won. How deemest thou, O King, of fetching Al-Abbas and documenting the marriage-contract between Mariyah and him?" and quoth Ins bin Kays, "Thine be the rede." So Al-Aziz sent after his son and acquainted him with that which had passed; whereupon Al-Abbas called for four-and-twenty mules and ten horses and as many camels, and loaded the mules with fathom-long pieces of silk and rugs of leather and boxes of camphor and musk, and the camels and horses with chests of gold and silver. Like he took the richest of the stuffs and, wrapping them in wrappers of gold-purfled silk, laid them on the heads of porters,[1] and they fared on with the treasures till they reached the King of Baghdad's palace, whereupon all who were present dismounted in honour of Al-Abbas and, escorting him in a body to the presence of Ins bin Kays, displayed to the King all that they had with them of things of price. The King bade carry all this into the store rooms of the Harim and sent for the Kazis and the witnesses, who wrote out the contract and married Mariyah to Al-Abbas, whereupon the Prince commanded slaughter one thousand head of sheep and five hundred buffaloes. So they spread the bride-feast and bade thereto all the tribes of the Arabs, men of tents and men of towns, and the banquet continued for the space of ten days. Then Al-Abbas went in to Mariyah in a commendable and

1 This passage is sadly disjointed in the text: I have followed Mr. Payne's ordering.

auspicious hour and lay with her, and found her a pearl unthridden and a goodly filly no rider had ridden[1]; wherefore he rejoiced and was glad and made merry, and care and sorrow ceased from him, and his life was pleasant and trouble departed, and he ceased not abiding with her in most joyful case and in the most easeful of life till seven days were past, when King Al-Aziz resolved to set out and return to his realm, and bade his son seek leave of his father-in-law to depart with his wife to his own country. So Al-Abbas spoke of this to King Ins, who granted him the permission he sought; whereupon he chose out a red camel,[2] taller and more valuable than the rest of the camels and, loading it with apparel and ornaments, mounted Mariyah in a litter thereon. Then they spread the ensigns and the standards, whilst kettle-drums beat and the trumpets blared, and set out upon the homewards way. The King of Baghdad rode forth with them and companied them three days' journey on their route, after which he farewelled them and returned with his troops to Baghdad. As for King Al-Aziz and his son, they fared on night and day, and gave not over going till there remained but three days' journey between them and Al-Yaman, when they despatched three men of the couriers to the Prince's mother to report that they were bringing with them Mariyah, the King's daughter of Baghdad, and returning safe and laden with spoil. When the Queen-mother heard this, her wit took wings for joy, and she adorned the slave-girls of Al-Abbas after the finest fashion. Now he had ten handmaids, as they were moons, whereof his father had carried five with him to Baghdad, as hath erst been set forth, and the remaining five abode with his mother. When the dromedary-posts[3] came, they were certified of the approach of Al-Abbas, and when the sun casted and their flags were seen flaunting, the Prince's mother came out to meet her son; nor on that day was there great or small, boy or grey-beard, but went forth to greet the king. Then the kettle-drums of glad tidings beat and they

1 The Arab of noble tribe is always the first to mount his own mare: he also greatly fears her being put out to full speed by a stranger, holding that this should be reserved for occasions of life and death; and that it can be done to perfection only once during the animal's life.

2 The red (Ahmar) dromedary like the white-red (Sahab) were most valued because they are supposed best to bear the heats of noon; and thus "red camels" is proverbially used for wealth When the head of Abu Jahl was brought in after the Battle of Bedr, Mohammed exclaimed, "'Tis more acceptable to me than a red camel!"

3 *i.e.*, couriers on dromedaries, the only animals used for sending messages over long distances

entered in the utmost of pomp and the extreme of magnificence; so that the tribes and the townspeople heard of them and brought them the richest of gifts and the rarest of presents, and the Prince's mother rejoiced with joy exceeding. They butchered beasts and spread mighty bride-feasts for the people and kindled fires,[1] that it might be visible afar to townsman and tribesman that this was the house of hospitality and the stead of the wedding-festival, to the intent that, if any passed them by, it should be of his own sin against himself. So the folk came to them from all districts and quarters, and in this way they abode days and months. Presently the Prince's mother bade fetch the five slave-girls to that assembly; whereupon they came and the ten damsels met. The queen seated five of them on her son's right hand and other five on his left, and the folk gathered about them. Then she bade the five who had remained with her speak forth somewhat of poesy, so they might entertain therewith the séance and that Al-Abbas might rejoice thereat. Now she had clad them in the costliest of clothes, and adorned them with trinkets and ornaments and moulded work of gold and silver and collars of gold, wrought with pearls and gems. So they paced forward, with harps and lutes and zithers and recorders, and other instruments of music, before them, and one of them, a damsel (who came from the land of China, and whose name was Bá'úthah), advanced and screwed up the strings of her lute. Then she cried out from the top of her head and recited these couplets:--

Indeed your land returned, when you returned, * To whilom light which overgrew its gloom:
Green grew the land that was afore dust-brown, * And fruits that failed again showed riping bloom:
And clouds rained treasures after rain had lacked, * And plenty poured from earth's re-opening womb.
Then ceased the woes, my lords, that garred us weep, * With tears like dragons' blood, our severance-doom,
Whose length, by Allah, made me yearn and pine, * Would Heaven, O lady mine, I were thy groom!

1 These guest-fires are famous in Arab poetry. So Al-Harírí (Ass. of Banu Haram) sings,—

A beacon fire I ever kindled high;

i.e., on the hill-tops near the camp, to guide benighted travellers. Also the Lamiyat al-Ajam says:--

The fire of hospitality is ever lit on the high stations.

This natural telegraph was used in a host of ways by the Arabs of The Ignorance; for instance, when a hated guest left the camp they lighted the "Fire of Rejection," and cried, "Allah, bear him far from us!" Nothing was more ignoble than to quench such fire.

When she had ended her song, all who were present were delighted, and Al-Abbas rejoiced in this. Then he bade the second damsel sing somewhat on the same theme. So she came forward and, tightening the strings of her harp, which was of balass ruby,[1] raised her voice in a plaintive air and improvised these couplets:—

Brought the Courier glad news of our absentees,[2] * To please us through those who had wrought us unease:
Cried I, "My life ransom thee, messenger man, * Thou hast kept thy faith, and thy boons are these."
An the nightlets of union in you we joyed, * When fared you, naught would our grief appease;
You sware that folk would to folk be true, * And you kept your oaths as good faith decrees.
To you made I oath true lover am I, * Heaven guard me when sworn from all perjuries:
I fared to meet you and loud I cried, * "Aha, fair welcome when come you please!"
And I joyed to meet you and when you came, * Deckt all the dwelling with tapestries,
And death in your absence to us was dight, * But your presence bringeth us life and light.

When she had made an end of her verse, Al-Abbas bade the third damsel (who came from Samarkand, of Ajam-land, and whose name was Rummánah) sing, and she answered, "To hear is to obey." Then she took the zither and crying out from the midst of her head, recited and sang these couplets[3]:—

My watering mouth declares thy myrtle-cheek my food to be * And cull my lips thy side-face rose, who lily art to me!
And twixt the dune and down there shows the fairest flower that blooms * Whose fruitage is granado's fruit with all granado's blee.[4]
Forget my lids of eyne their sleep for magic eyes of him; * Naught since he fared but drowsy charms and languorous air I see.
He shot me down with shaft of glance from bow of eyebrow sped: * What Chamberlain[5] betwixt his eyes garred all my pleasure flee?

1 *i.e.*, of rare wood, set with rubies.

2 *i.e.*, whose absence pained us.

3 Mr. Payne and I have long puzzled over these enigmatical and possibly corrupt lines: he wrote to me in 1884, "This is the first piece that has beaten me." In the couplet above (vol. xii. 230) "Rayhání" may mean "my basil-plant" or "my food" (the latter Koranic), "my compassion," etc.; and Súsání is equally ancipitous, "my lilies" or "my sleep": see Bard al-Susan=les douceurs du sommeil in Al-Mas'údi, vol. vii. 168.

4 The "Niká," or sand hill, is the swell of the throat: the Ghaur or lowland is the fall of the waist: the flower is the breast.

5 Arab. "Hájib," eyebrow or chamberlain; see vol. iii. night clxxxi. The pun is classical, used by a host of poets including Al-Harírí.

Haply shall heart of me seduce his heart by weakness' force * E'en as his own seductive grace garred me love-ailment dree.
For an by him forgotten be our pact and covenant * I have a King who never will forget my memory.
His sides bemock the bending charms of waving Tamarisk,[1] * And in his beauty-pride he walks as drunk with coquetry:
His feet and legs be feather-light whene'er he deigns to run * And say, did any ride the wind except 'twere Solomon[2]?

Therewith Al-Abbas smiled, and her verses pleased him. Then he bade the fourth damsel come forward and sing (now she was from the Sundown-land[3] and her name was Balakhshá); so she came forward and, taking the lute and the zither, tuned the strings and smote them in many modes; then she returned to the first, and improvising sang these couplets:—

When to the séance all for pleasure hied * Thy lamping eyes illumined its every side;
While playing round us o'er the wine-full bowl * Those necklace-pearls old wine with pleasure plied,[4]
Till wits the wisest drunken by her grace * Betrayed for joyance secrets sages hide;
And, seen the cup, we bade it circle round * While sun and moon spread radiance side and wide.
We raised for lover veil of love perforce * And came glad tidings which new joys applied:
Loud sang the camel-guide; won was our wish * Nor was the secret by the spy espied:
And, when my days were blest by union-bliss * And to all-parting Time was aid denied,
Each 'bode with other, clear of meddling spy, * Nor feared we hate of foe or neighbour-pride.
The sky was bright, friends came and severance fared * And Love-in-union rained boons multiplied:
Saying, "Fulfil fair union, all are gone * Rivals and fears lest shaming foe deride":
Friends now conjoinèd are: wrong passed away, * And meeting-cup goes round and joys abide:

1 Arab. "Tarfah." There is a Tarfia Island in the Guadalquivir, and in Gibraltar a "Tarfah Alto" opposed to "Tarfah bajo." But it must not be confounded with Tarf=a side, found in the Maroccan term for "The Rock" Jabal al-Tarf=Mountain of the Point (of Europe)

2 For Solomon and his flying carpet see vol iii. night cc.

3 Arab "Bilád al-Maghrib (al-Aksa," in full) = the Farthest Land of the setting Sun, shortly called Al-Maghrib and the people "Maghribi." The earliest occurrence of our name Morocco or Marocco I find in the "Marákiyah" of Al-Mas'udi (iii. 241), who apparently applies it to a district whither the Berbers migrated

4 The necklace-pearls are the cup-bearer's teeth.

On you be Allah's Peace with every boon * Till end the dooming years and time and tide.

When Balakhshá had ended her verse, all present were moved to delight, and Al-Abbas said to her, "Brava, O damsel!" Then he bade the fifth damsel come forward and sing (now she was from the land of Syria, and her name was Rayhánah; she was passing of voice, and when she appeared in an assembly all eyes were fixed upon her), so she came forward and taking the viol (for she was used to play upon all instruments) recited and sang these couplets:—

Your me-wards coming I hail to sight; * Your look is a joy driving woe from sprite:
With you love is blest, pure and white of soul; * Life's sweet and my planet grows green and bright:
By Allah, you-wards my pine ne'er ceased * And your like is rare and right worthy hight.
Ask my eyes an e'er since the day ye went * They tasted sleep, looked on lover-wight:
My heart by the parting-day was broke, * And my wasted body betrays my plight:
Could my blamers see in what grief am I, * They had wept in wonder my loss, my blight!
They had joined me in shedding torrential tears, * And like me a-morn had shown thin and slight:
How long for your love shall your lover bear * This weight o'er much for the hill's strong height?
By Allah, what then for your sake was doomed * To my heart, a heart by its woes turned white!
An showed I the fires that aye flare in me, * They had 'flamed Eastern world and earth's Western site.
But after this is my love fulfilled * With joy and gladness and mere delight;
And the Lord who scattered hath brought us back, * For who doeth good shall of good ne'er lack.

When King Al-Aziz heard the damsel's song, both words and verses pleased him, and he said to Al-Abbas, "O my son, verily long versifying hath tired these damsels, and indeed they make us yearn after the houses and the homesteads with the beauty of their songs. These five have adorned our meeting with the charm of their melodies, and have done well in that which they have said before those who are present; so we counsel thee to free them for the love of Allah Almighty." Quoth Al-Abbas, "There is no command but thy command"; and he enfranchised the ten damsels

in the assembly; whereupon they kissed the hands of the King and his son, and prostrated themselves in thanksgiving to the Lord of All-might. Then they put off that which was upon them of ornaments and, laying aside the lutes and other instruments of music, kept to their houses like modest women and veiled, and fared not forth.[1] As for King Al-Aziz, he lived after this seven years and was removed to the mercy of Almighty Allah; when his son Al-Abbas bore him forth to burial as beseemeth kings, and let make for him prelections and professional recitations of the Koran. He kept up the mourning for his father during four successive weeks, and when a full-told month had elapsed he sat down on the throne of the kingship and judged, and did justice and distributed silver and gold. He also loosed all who were in the jails and abolished grievances, and customs dues, and righted the oppressed of the oppressor; so the lieges prayed for him, and loved him, and invoked on him endurance of glory and continuance of kingship, and length of life, and eternity of prosperity and happiness. The troops submitted to him, and the hosts from all parts of the kingdom, and there came to him presents from each and every land: the kings obeyed him and many were his warriors and his grandees, and his subjects lived with him the most easeful of lives and the most delightsome. Meanwhile, he ceased not, he and his beloved, Queen Mariyah, in the most enjoyable of life and the pleasantest, and he was vouchsafed by her children; and indeed there befell friendship and affection between them, and the longer their companionship was prolonged, the more their love waxed, so that they became unable to endure each from other a single hour, save the time of his going forth to the Diwan, when he would return to her in the liveliest that might be of longing. And after this fashion they abode in all solace of life and satisfaction till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. So extolled be the Eternal Whose sway endureth for ever and aye, Who never unheedeth neither dieth nor sleepeth! This is all that hath come down to us of their tale, and so the Peace!

1 In these unregenerate days they would often be summoned to the houses of the royal family; but now they, becoming freed women, were resolved to be "respectable." In not a few Moslem countries men of wealth and rank marry professional singers who, however loose may have been their artistic lives, mostly distinguish themselves by decency of behaviour often pushed to the extreme of rigour. Also jeune coquette, vieille dévotée, is a rule of the world, Eastern and Western.

SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR.[1]

KING SHAHRYAR marvelled at this history[2] and said, "By Allah, verily, injustice slayeth its folk[3]!" And he was edified by that wherewith Shahrazad bespoke him and sought help of Allah the Most High. Then said he to her, "Tell me another of thy tales, O Shahrazad; supply me with a pleasant story and this shall be the completion of the story-telling." Shahrazad replied, "With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that a man once declared to his mates, I will set forth to you a means of security against annoy. A friend of mine once related to me and said:—We attained to security against annoy, and the origin of it was other than this; that is, it was the following[4]:—

TALE OF THE TWO KINGS AND THE WAZIR'S DAUGHTERS.[5]

I OVERTRAVELLED whilome lands and climes and towns and visited the cities of high renown, and traversed the ways of dangers and hardships. Towards the last of my life I entered a city of the cities of China,[6] wherein was a king of the Chosroës and the

1 Bresl. Edit., vol. xii. p. 383 (night mi.). The king is called as usual "Shahrbán," which is nearly synonymous with Shahryár.

2 *i.e.*, the old Sindibad-Námeh (see vol. iv. night dlxxviii.), or the "Malice of Women," which the Bresl. Edit entitles, "Tale of the King and his Son and his Wife and the Seven Wazirs." Here it immediately follows the Tale of Al-Abbas and Mariyah, and occupies pp. 237-383 of vol xii. (nights dcccclxxix-m.).

3 *i.e.*, those who commit it.

4 The connection between this pompous introduction and the story which follows is not apparent. The "Tale of the Two Kings and the Wazir's Daughters" is that of Shahrazad told in the third person, in fact a rechauffé of the Introduction. But as some three years have passed since the marriage, and the dénoûment of the plot is at hand, the Princess is made, with some art, I think, to lay the whole affair before her husband in her own words, the better to bring him to a "sense of his duty."

5 Bresl. Edit., vol. xii. pp. 384-412.

6 This clause is taken from the sequence, where the elder brother's kingdom is placed in China.

Tobbas[1] and the Cæsars.[2] Now that city had been peopled with its inhabitants by means of justice and equity; but its then king was a tyrant dire who despoiled lives and souls at his desire; in fine, there was no warming one's self at his fire,[3] for that, indeed, he oppressed the believing band and wasted the land. Now he had a younger brother, who was king in Samarkand of the Persians, and the two kings sojourned a while of time, each in his own city and stead, till they yearned unto each other, and the elder king despatched his Wazir to fetch his younger brother. When the Minister came to the King of Samarkand and acquainted him with his errand, he submitted himself to the bidding of his brother and answered, "To hear is to obey." Then he equipped himself and made ready for wayfare, and brought forth his tents and pavilions. A while after midnight he went in to his wife that he might farewell her, and found with her a strange man lying by her in one bed. So he slew them both and, dragging them out by the feet, cast them away and set forth on his march. When he came to his brother's court, the elder king rejoiced in him with joy exceeding, and lodged him in the pavilion of hospitality beside his own palace. Now this pavilion overlooked a flower-garden belonging to the elder brother, and there the younger abode with him some days. Then he called to mind that which his wife had done with him and remembered her slaughter, and bethought him how he was a king, yet was not exempt from the shifts of Time; and this affected him with exceeding affect, so that it drave him to abstain from meat and drink, or, if he ate anything, it profited him naught. When his brother saw him on such wise, he deemed that this had betided him by reason of severance from his folk and family, and said to him, "Come, let us fare forth a-coursing and a-hunting." But he refused to go with him; so the elder brother went to the

1 For the Tobbas = "Successors" or the Himyaritic kings, see vol. i. night xxii.

2 Kayásirah, opp. to Akásirah, here and in many other places.

3 See vol. i. night xlv. King Kulayb ("little dog") al-Wá'il, a powerful chief of the Banu Ma'ad in the Kasín district of Najd, who was connected with the war of Al-Basús. He is so called because he lamed a pup (kulayb) and tied it up in the midst of his Himá (domain, place of pasture and water), forbidding men to camp within sound of its bark or sight of his fire. Hence "more masterful than Kulayb," A.P. ii. 145, and Al-Hariri, Ass xxvi. (Chenery, p. 448). This angry person came by his death for wounding in the udder a trespassing camel (Sorab) whose owner was a woman named Basús. Her friend (Jasús) slew him; and thus arose the famous long war between the tribes Wá'il Bakr and Taghlib. It gave origin to the saying, "Die thou, and be an expiation for the shoe-latchet of Kulayb."

chase, whilst the younger abode in the pavilion aforesaid. Now, as he was diverting himself by looking out upon the flower-garden from the latticed window of the palace, behold he saw his brother's wife, and with her ten black slaves and ten slave-girls. Each slave laid hold of a damsel, and another slave came forth and did the like with the queen; and when they had their wills one of other they all returned whence they came. Hereat there betided the King of Samarkand exceeding surprise and solace, and he was made whole of his malady little by little. After a few days his brother returned and, finding him cured of his complaint, said to him, "Tell me, O my brother, what was the cause of thy sickness and thy pallor, and what is the reason of the return of health to thee and of rosiness to thy face after this?" So he acquainted him with the whole case, and this was grievous to him; but they hid their affair and agreed to leave the kingship and fare forth a-pilgrimaging and adventuring at hap-hazard, for they deemed that there had befallen none the like of what had befallen them. Accordingly they went forth, and as they journeyed they saw by the way a woman imprisoned in seven chests, whereon were five padlocks, and sunken deep in the midst of the salt sea, under the guardianship of an Ifrit; yet, for all this, that woman issued out of the ocean and opened those padlocks, and coming forth of those chests did what she would with the two brothers after she had practised upon the Ifrit. When the two kings saw that woman's fashion, and how she circumvented the Ifrit who had lodged her in the abyss of the main, they turned back to their kingdoms, and the younger betook himself to Samarkand, whilst the elder returned to China and contrived for himself a custom in the slaughter of damsels, which was, his Wazir used to bring him every night a girl with whom he lay that night, and when he arose in the morning he gave her to the Minister and bade him do her die. After this fashion he abode a long time, whilst the folk murmured, and God's creatures were destroyed, and the commons cried out by reason of that grievous affair into which they were fallen, and feared the wrath of Allah Almighty, dreading lest He destroy them by means of this. Still the king persisted in that practice, and in his blameworthy intent of the killing of damsels and the despoilment of maidens concealed by veils,[1] wherefore the girls sought succour of the Lord of All-might, and complained to Him of the tyranny of the king and of his

1 Arab. "Mukhaddarât," maidens concealed behind curtains and veiled in the Harem.

oppression. Now the king's Wazir had two daughters, sisters german, the elder of whom had read the books and made herself mistress of the sciences, and studied the writings of the sages and the stories of the cup-companions,[1] and she was a maiden of abundant lore and knowledge galore and wit than which naught can be more. She heard that which the folk suffered from that king in his misusage of their children; whereupon ruth for them gat hold of her, and jealousy, and she besought Allah Almighty that He would bring the king to renounce that his new and accursed custom,[2] and the Lord answered her prayer. Then she consulted her younger sister and said to her, "I mean to devise a device for freeing the children of folk; to wit, I will go up to the king and offer myself to marry him, and when I come to his presence I will send to fetch thee. When thou comest in to me and the king hath had his carnal will of me, do thou say to me:—O my sister, let me hear a story of thy goodly stories, wherewith we may beguile the waking hours of our night till the dawn, when we take leave each of other; and let the king hear it likewise!" The other replied "'Tis well; forsure this contrivance will deter the king from this innovation he practiseth, and thou shalt be requited with favour exceeding and recompence abounding in the world to come, for that, indeed, thou perilest thy life, and wilt either perish or win to thy wish." So she did this and Fortune favoured her, and the Divine direction was vouchsafed to her and she discovered her design to her sire, the Wazir, who thereupon forbade her, fearing her slaughter. However, she repeated her words to him a second time, and a third, but he consented not. Then he cited to her a parable, which should deter her, and she cited to him a parable of import contrary to his, and the debate was prolonged between them and the adducing of instances, till her father saw that he was powerless to turn her from her purpose, and she said to him, "There is no help but that I marry the King, so haply I may be a sacrifice for the children of the Moslems: either I shall turn him from this his heresy or I shall die." When the Minister despaired of dissuading her, he went up to the king and acquainted him with the case, saying, "I have a maiden

1 i.e., the professional Rawis or tale-reciters who learned stories by heart from books like "The Arabian Nights." See my Terminal Essay.

2 Arab. "Bid'ah," lit. = an innovation, a new thing, an invention, any change from the custom of the Prophet and the universal practice of the Faith, whether it be in the cut of the beard or a question of state policy. Popularly the word = heterodoxy, heresy; but theologically it is not necessarily used in a bad sense. See vol. iv. night ccccxxv.

daughter and she desireth to give herself in free gift to the King." Quoth the King, "How can thy soul consent to this, seeing that thou knowest I abide but a single night with a girl, and when I arise on the morrow I do her dead, and 'tis thou who slayest her, and again and again thou hast done this?" Quoth the Wazir, "Know, O king, that I have set forth all this to her, yet consented she not to aught, but needs must she have thy company, and she chooseth to come to thee and present herself before thee, albeit I have cited to her the sayings of the sages; but she hath answered me with more than that which I said to her, and contrariwise." Then quoth the king, "Suffer her visit me this night, and to-morrow morning come thou and take her and kill her; and by Allah, an thou slay her not, I will slay thee and her also!" The Minister obeyed the king's bidding and, going out from the presence, returned home. When it was night he took his elder daughter and carried her up to the king; and when she came before him she wept[1]; whereupon he asked her, "What causeth thee weep? indeed, 'twas thou who willedst this." She answered, "I weep not but of longing after my little sister; for that, since we grew up, I and she, I have never been parted from her till this day; so, an it please the King to send for her, that I may look on her, and listen to her speech and take my fill of her till the morning, this were a boon and an act of kindness of the King." So he bade fetch the damsel, and she came. Then there befell that which befell of his union with the elder sister, and when he went up to his couch that he might sleep, the younger sister said to her elder, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not asleep, tell us a tale of thy goodly tales, wherewith we may beguile the watches of our night, ere day dawn and parting." Said she, "With love and gladness"; and fell to relating to her, whilst the king listened. Her story was goodly and delectable, and whilst she was in the midst of telling it the dawn brake. Now the king's heart clave to the hearing of the rest of the story; so he respited her till the morrow; and when it was the next night, she told him a tale concerning the marvels of the lands and the wonders of Allah's creatures, which was yet stranger and rarer than the first. In the midst of the recital appeared the day, and she was silent from the permitted say. So he let

1 About three parts of this sentence have been supplied by Mr. Payne, the careless scribe having evidently omitted it.

her live till the following night, that he might hear the nd of the history, and after that slay her. On this wise it fortuned with her; but as regards the people of the city, they rejoiced and were glad, and blessed the Wazir's daughters, marvelling for that three days had passed and that the king had not put his bride to death, and exulting in that he had returned to the ways of righteousness, and would never again burthen himself with blood-guilt against any of the maidens of the city. Then, on the fourth night, she related to him a still more extraordinary adventure, and on the fifth night she told him anecdotes of Kings and Wazirs and Notables. Brief, she ceased not to entertain him many days and nights, while the king still said to himself, "Whenas I shall have heard the end of the tale, I will do her die," and the people redoubled their marvel and admiration. Also the folk of the circuits and cities heard of this thing, to wit, that the king had turned from his custom and from that which he had imposed upon himself, and had renounced his heresy, wherefor they rejoiced and the lieges returned to the capital and took up their abode therein, after they had departed thence; and they were constant in prayer to Allah Almighty that He would stablish the king in his present stead." "And this," said Shahrazad, "is the end of that which my friend related to me." Quoth Shahryar,[1] "O Shahrazad, finish for us the tale thy friend told thee, inasmuch as it resembleth the story of a King whom I knew; but fain would I hear that which betided the people of this city and what they said of the affair of the King, so I may return from the case wherein I was." She replied, "With love and gladness!" Know, O auspicious king and lord of right rede and praiseworthy meed and prowest of deed, that, when the folk heard how the king had put away from him his malpractice and returned from his unrighteous wont, they rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and offered up prayers for him. Then they talked one with other of the cause of the slaughter of the maidens, and the wise said, "Women are not all alike, nor are the fingers of the hand alike." Now when King Shahryar heard this story he came to himself and, awaking from his drunkenness,[2] said, "By Allah, this story is my story and this case is my case, for that indeed I was in reprobation and danger of judgment till thou turnedst

1 Al-Mas'udi (vol. iv, p. 213) uses this term to signify viceroy in "Shahryáh Sajastán."

2 *i.e.*, his indifference to the principles of right and wrong, which is a manner of moral intoxication.

me back from this into the right way, extolled be the Causer of causes and the Liberator of necks!" presently adding, "Indeed, O Shahrazad, thou hast awakened me to many things and hast aroused me from mine ignorance of the right." Then said she to him, "O chief of the kings, the wise say:—The kingship is a building, whereof the troops are the base, and when the foundation is strong, the building endureth; wherefore it behoveth the king to strengthen the foundation, for that they say, Whenas the base is weak, the building falleth. In like fashion it besitteth the king to care for his troops and do justice among his lieges, even as the owner of the garden careth for his trees and cutteth away the weeds that have no profit in them; and so it befitteth the king to look into the affairs of his Ryots and fend off oppression from them. As for thee, O king, it behoveth thee that thy Wazir be virtuous and experienced in the requirements of the people and the peasantry; and indeed Allah the Most High hath named his name[1] in the history of Musà (on whom be the Peace!) when he saith:—And make me a Wazir of my people, Aaron. Now could a Wazir have been dispensed withal, Moses, son of Imrán, had been worthier than any to do without a Minister. As for the Wazir, the Sultan discovereth unto him his affairs, private and public; and know, O king, that the likeness of thee with the people is that of the leach with the sick man; and the essential condition of the Minister is that he be soothfast in his sayings, reliable in all his relations, rich in ruth for the folk, and in tenderness of transacting with them. Verily, it is said, O king, that good troops be like the druggist; if his perfumes reach thee not, thou still smellest the fragrance of them; and bad entourage be like the blacksmith; if his sparks burn thee not, thou smellest his evil smell. So it befitteth thee take to thyself a virtuous Wazir, a veracious counsellor, even as thou takest unto thee a wife displayed before thy face, because thou needest the man's righteousness for thine own right directing, seeing that, if thou do righteously, the commons will do right, and if thou do wrongously, they also will do wrong." When the King heard this, drowsiness overcame him and he slept and, presently awaking, called for the candles; so they were lighted, and he sat down on his couch and, seating Shahrazad by him, smiled in her face. She kissed the ground before him and said, "O king of the age and lord of the time and the years, extolled be the Forgiving, the Bountiful, who hath sent me to thee, of His grace and good favour, so I have

1 *i.e.*, hath mentioned the office of Wazir (in Koran xx. 30).

incited thee to longing after Paradise; for verily this which thou was wont do was never done of any of the kings before thee. Then laud be to the Lord who hath directed thee into the right way, and who from the paths of frowardness hath diverted thee! As for women, Allah Almighty maketh mention of them also when He saith in His Holy Book:—"Truly, the men who resign themselves to Allah[1] and the women who resign themselves, and the true-believing men and the true-believing women, and the devout men and the devout women, and truthful men and truthful women, and long-suffering men and long-suffering women, and the humble men and the humble women, and charitable men and charitable women, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and men who guard themselves and women who guard themselves, and men who are constantly mindful of Allah and women who are constantly mindful, for them Allah hath prepared forgiveness and a rich reward.[2] As for that which hath befallen thee, verily, it hath befallen many kings before thee and their women have falsed them, for all they were more majestical of puissance than thou, and mightier of kingship and had troops more manifold. If I would, I could relate unto thee, O king, concerning the wiles of women, that whereof I should not make an end all my life long; and indeed, in all these my nights that I have passed before thee, I have told thee many tales of the wheedling of women and of their craft; but soothly the things abound on me[3]; so, an thou please, O king, I will relate to thee somewhat of that which befell olden kings of perfidy from their women and of the calamities which overtook them by reason of these deceivers. Asked the king, "How so? Tell on"; and she answered, "Hearkening and obedience. It hath been told me, O king, that a man once related to a company the following tale of

THE CONCUBINE AND THE CALIPH.[4]

ONE day of the days, as I stood at the door of my house, and the heat was excessive, behold, I saw a fair woman approaching, and

1 *i.e.*, Moslems, who practise the Religion of Resignation.

2 Koran xxxiii. 35. This is a proemium to the "revelation" concerning Zayd and Zaynab.

3 *i.e.*, I have an embarras de richesse in my repertory.

4 The title is from the Bresl. Edit. (vol. xii. pp 398-402). Mr. Payne calls it "The Favourite and her Lover."

with her a slave-girl carrying a parcel. They gave not over going till they came up to me, when the woman stopped and asked me, "Hast thou a draught of water?" Answered I, "Yes, enter the vestibule, O my lady, so thou mayst drink." Accordingly she came in and I went up into the house and fetched two gugglets of earthenware, smoked with musk[1] and full of cold water. She took one of them and discovered her face, the better to drink; whereupon I saw that she was as the rising moon or the resplendent sun, and said to her, "O my lady, wilt thou not come up into the house, so thou mayst rest thyself till the air cool, and afterwards fare thee to thine own place?" Quoth she, "Is there none with thee?" and quoth I, "Indeed I am a bachelor and have none belonging to me, nor is there a wight in the site[2]; whereupon she said, "An thou be a stranger, thou art he in quest of whom I was going about." So she went up into the house and doffed her walking dress, and I found her as she were the full moon. I brought her what I had by me of food and drink and said to her, "O my lady, excuse me: this is all that is ready"; and said she, "This is right good[3] and indeed 'tis what I sought." Then she ate and gave the slave-girl that which was left; after which I brought her a casting-bottle of musked rose-water, and she washed her hands and abode with me till the season of mid-afternoon prayer, when she brought out of the parcel she had with her a shirt and trousers and an upper garment[4] and a gold-worked kerchief and gave them to me; saying, "Know that I am one of the concubines of the Caliph, and we be forty concubines, each of whom hath a cicisbeo who cometh to her as often as she would have him; and none is without a lover save myself, wherefore I came forth this day to get me a gallant, and now I have found thee. Thou must know that the Caliph lieth each night with one of us, whilst the other nine-and-thirty concubines take their ease with the nine-and-thirty masculines, and I would have thee company with me on such a day, when do thou come up to the palace of the Caliph and sit awaiting me in such a place, till a little eunuch come out to thee and say to thee a certain watch-word, which is, Art thou Sandal? Answer Yes, and wend thee with him." Then

1 The practice of fumigating gugglets is universal in Egypt (Lane, M.E., chap. v.); but I never heard of musk being so used.

2 Arab. "Laysa fi 'l-diyári dayyár"—a favourite jingle.

3 Arab. "Khayr Kathir" (pron. Katír) which also means "abundant kindness."

4 Dozy says of "Hunayní" (Haíní), Il semble être le nom d'un vêtement. On which we may remark, Connu!

she took leave of me and I of her, after I had strained her to my bosom and thrown my arms round her neck and we had exchanged kisses awhile. So she fared forth and I abode patiently expecting the appointed day, till it came, when I arose and went out, intending for the trysting-place; but a friend of mine met me by the way and made me go home with him. I accompanied him, and when I came up into his sitting-chamber he locked the door on me and walked out to fetch what we might eat and drink. He was absent until midday, then till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, whereat I was chagrined with sore concern. Then he was missing till sundown, and I was like to die of vexation and impatience; and indeed he returned not and I passed my night on wake, nigh upon death, for the door was locked on me, and my soul was like to depart my body on account of the assignation. At daybreak my friend returned and, opening the door, came in, bringing with him meat-pudding[1] and fritters and bees' honey, and said to me, "By Allah, thou must needs excuse me, for that I was with a company and they locked the door on me and have let me go but this very moment." I returned him no reply; however, he set before me that which was with him, and I ate a single mouthful and went out running at speed so haply I might overtake the rendezvous which had escaped me. When I came to the palace, I saw over against it eight-and-thirty gibbets set up, whereon were eight-and-thirty men crucified, and under them eight-and-thirty[2] concubines as they were moons. So I asked the cause of the crucifixion of the men and concerning the women in question, and it was said unto me, "The men thou seest crucified the Caliph found with yonder damsels, who be his bed-fellows." When I heard this, I prostrated myself in thanksgiving to Allah and said, "The Almighty requite thee with all good, O my friend!" For had he not invited me and locked me up in his house that night, I had been crucified with these men, wherefore Alhamdolillah—laud to the Lord! "On this wise" (continued Shahrazad), "none is safe from the calamities of the world and the vicissitudes of Time, and in proof of this I will relate unto thee yet another story still rarer and stranger than this. Know, O king, that one said to me:—A friend of mine, a merchant, told me the following tale of

1 Arab. Harísah: see vol. i. night xiii. Westerns make a sad mess of this dish when they describe it as une sorte *d'olla podrida* (the hotch-pot), une pâtée de viandes, de froment et de légumes secs (Al-Mas'udi, viii. 438). Whenever I have eaten it, it was always a meat pudding, for which see vol. i. night xiii.

2 Evidently one escaped because she was sleeping with the Caliph and a second because she had kept her assignation.

THE CONCUBINE OF AL-MAAMUN.[1]

As I sat one day in my shop, there came up to me a fair woman, as she were the moon at its rising, and with her a hand-maid. Now I was a handsome man in my time; so that lady sat down on my shop,[2] and buying stuffs of me, paid the price and went her ways. I asked the girl anent her, and she answered, "I know not her name." Quoth I, "Where is her abode?" Quoth she, "In heaven"; and I, "She is presently on the earth; so when doth she ascend to heaven, and where is the ladder by which she goeth up[3]?" The girl retorted, "She hath her lodging in a palace between two rivers,[4] that is, in the palace of Al-Maamún al-Hákim bi-Amri 'llah.[5]" Then said I, "I am a dead man, without a doubt"; but she replied, "Have patience, for needs must she return to thee and buy other stuffs of thee." I asked, "And how cometh it that the Commander of the Faithful trusteth her to go out?" and she answered, "He loveth her with exceeding love, and is wrapped up in her and crosseth her not." Then the slave-girl went away, running after her mistress; whereupon I left the shop and followed them, so I might see her abiding-place. I kept them in view all the way, till she disappeared from mine eyes, when I returned to my place, with heart a-fire. Some days after, she came to me again and bought stuffs of me: I refused to take the price, and she cried, "We have no need of thy goods." Quoth I, "O my lady, accept them from me as a gift"; but quoth she, "Wait till I try thee and make proof of thee." Then she brought out of her pocket a purse and gave

1 Mr. Payne entitles it, "The Merchant of Cairo and the Favourite of the Khalif el Mamoun el Hakim bi Amrillah."

2 See my Pilgrimage (i. 100): the seat would be on the same bit of boarding where the master sits or on a stool or bench in the street.

3 This is true Cairene chaff, give and take; and the stranger must accustom himself to it before he can be at home with the people.

4 *i.e.*, in Rauzah-island: see vol. iv. night cccxxvi.

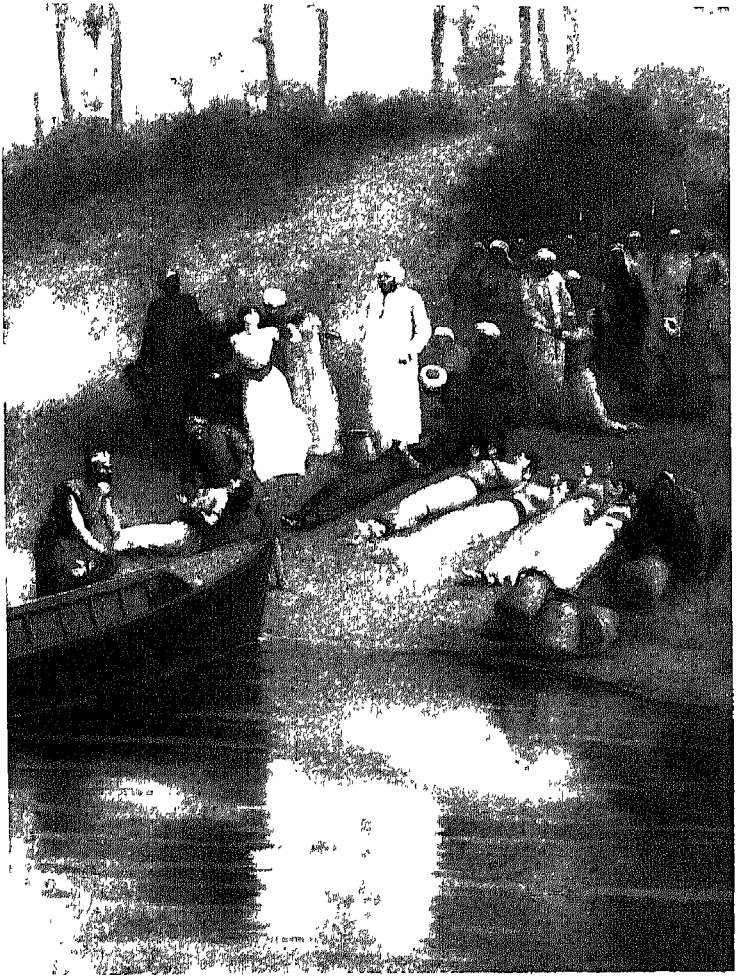
5 There is no historical person who answers to these names, "The Secure, the Ruler, by Commandment of Allah." The cognomen applies to two soldans of Egypt, of whom the later Abu al-Abbas Ahmad the Abbaside (A.D. 1261-1301) has already been mentioned in The Nights (vol. iii. night ccclxxxix. The tale suggests the earlier Al-Hakim (Abu Ali al-Mansúr, the Fatimite, A.D. 995-1021), the God of the Druze "persuasion"; and the tale-teller may have purposely blundered in changing Mansúr to Maamún for fear of offending a sect which has been most dangerous in the matter of assassination and which is capable of becoming so again.

me therefrom a thousand dinars, saying, "Trade with this till I return to thee." So I took the purse, and she went away and returned not till six months had passed. Meanwhile, I traded with the money, and sold and bought and made other thousand dinars profit on it. At last she came to me again, and I said to her, "Here is thy money, and I have gained with it other thousand ducats"; and she, "Let it lie by thee, and take these other thousand dinars. As soon as I have departed from thee, go thou to Al-Rauzah, the Garden-holm, and build there a goodly pavilion, and when the edifice is accomplished give me to know thereof." So saying, she left me and went away. As soon as she was gone, I betook myself to Al-Rauzah and fell to building the pavilion, and when it was finished I furnished it with the finest of furniture, and sent to tell her that I had made an end of the edifice; whereupon she sent back to me, saying, "Let him meet me to-morrow about daybreak at the Zuwaylah gate and bring with him a strong ass." I did as she bade and, betaking myself to the Zuwaylah gate at the appointed time, found there a young man on horseback, awaiting her even as I awaited her. As we stood, behold, up she came, and with her a slave-girl. When she saw that young man, she asked him, "Art thou here?" and he answered, "Yes, O my lady." Quoth she, "To-day I am invited by this man: wilt thou wend with us?" and quoth he, "Yes." Then said she, "Thou hast brought me hither against my will and parforce. Wilt thou go with us in any case[1]?" He cried "Yes, yes," and we fared on, all three, till we came to Al-Rauzah and entered the pavilion. The dame diverted herself awhile with viewing its ordinance and furniture, after which she doffed her walking-dress and sat down with the young man in the goodliest and chiefest place. Then I fared forth and brought them what they should eat at the first of the day; presently I again went out and fetched them what they should eat at the last of the day and brought for the twain wine and dessert, and fruits and flowers. After this fashion I abode in their service, standing on my feet, and she said not unto me, "Sit," nor "Take, eat," nor "Take, drink," while she and the young man sat toying and laughing, and he fell to kissing her and pinching her, and hopping over the ground[2] and laughing. They remained

1 Arab. "'Alà kulli hál" = "whatever may betide," or "willy-nilly." The phrase is still popular.

2 The dulce desipere of young lovers, he making a buffoon of himself to amuse her.

thus awhile and presently she said, "Hitherto we have not become drunken; let me pour out." So she took the cup, and crowning it, gave him to drink and plied him with wine, till he lost his wits, when she took him up and carried him into a closet. Then she came out, with the head of that youth in her hand, while I stood silent, fixing not mine eyes on her eyes, neither questioning her of the case; and she asked me, "What be this?" "I wot not," answered I; and she said, "Take it and throw it into the river." I accepted her commandment, and she arose and stripping herself of her clothes, took a knife and cut the dead man's body in pieces, which she laid in three baskets, and said to me, "Throw them into the river." I did her bidding, and when I returned she said to me, "Sit, so I may relate to thee yonder fellow's case, lest thou be affrighted at what accident hath befallen him. Thou must know that I am the Caliph's favourite concubine, nor is there any higher in honour with him than I; and I am allowed six nights in each month, wherein I go down into the city and tarry with my whilome mistress who reared me; and when I go down thus, I dispose of myself as I will. Now this young man was the son of certain neighbours of my mistress, when I was a virgin girl. One day, my mistress was sitting with the chief officers of the palace and I was alone in the house, and as the night came on, I went up to the terrace-roof in order to sleep there; but, ere I was ware, this youth came up from the street and, falling upon me, knelt on my breast. He was armed with a dagger, and I could not get free of him till he had taken my virginity by force; and this sufficed him not, but he must needs disgrace me with all the folk for, as often as I came down from the palace, he would stand in wait for me by the way and possess me against my will and follow me whithersoever I went. This, then, is my story, and as for thee, thou pleasest me and thy patience pleaseth me, and thy good faith and loyal service, and there abideth with me none dearer than thou." Then I lay with her that night and there befell what befell between us till the morning, when she gave me abundant wealth and took to meeting me at the pavilion six days in every month. After this wise we passed a whole year, at the end of which she cut herself off from me a month's space, wherefore fire raged in my heart on her account. When it was the next month, behold, a little eunuch presented himself to me and said, "I am a messenger to thee from Such-an-one, who giveth thee to know that the Commander



No. 61.

The Concubine of al-Maamun.

"Up came the guards and eunuchs escorting the women, who were weeping and shrieking and farewelling one another. . . . Now each of them was shackled."

of the Faithful hath ordered her to be drowned, her and those who are with her, six-and-twenty slave-girls, on such a day at Dayr al-Tin,[1] for that they have confessed of lewdness, one against other, and she sayeth to thee, Look how thou mayst do with me and how thou mayst contrive to deliver me, even an thou gather together all my money and spend it upon me, for that this be the time of manhood.[2]" Quoth I, "I know not this woman; belike it is other than I to whom this message is sent; so beware, O Eunuch, lest thou cast me into a cleft." Quoth he, "Behold, I have told thee that I had to say," and went away, leaving me in sore concern on her account. Now when the appointed day came I arose, and, changing my clothes and favour, donned sailor's apparel; then I took with me a purse full of gold and, buying a right good breakfast, accosted a boatman at Dayr al-Tin and sat down and ate with him; after which I asked him, "Wilt thou hire me thy boat?" Answered he, "The Commander of the Faithful hath commanded me to be here"; and he told me the tale of the concubines and how the Caliph purposed to drown them that day. When I heard this from him, I brought out to him ten gold pieces and discovered to him my case, whereupon he said to me, "O my brother, get thee empty gourds, and when thy mistress cometh give me to know of her and I will contrive the trick." So I kissed his hand and thanked him and, as I was walking about, waiting, up came the guards and eunuchs escorting the women, who were weeping and shrieking and farewelling one another. The Castratos cried out to us, whereupon we came with the boat, and they said to the sailor, "Who be this?" Said he, "This be my mate whom I have brought to help me, so one of us may keep the boat, whilst another doth your service." Then they brought out to us the women, one by one, saying, "Throw them in by the Island"; and we replied, "'Tis well." Now each of them was shackled and they had made fast about her neck a jar of sand. We did as the neutrals bade us and ceased not to take the women, one after other, and cast them in, till they gave us my mistress, and I winked at my mate. So we took her and carried her out into mid-stream, where I threw to her the empty gourds[3] and said to

1 "The Convent of Clay," a Coptic monastery near Cairo.

2 *i.e.*, this is the time to show thyself a man.

3 The Eastern succedaneum for swimming-corks and other "life preservers." The practice is very ancient: we find these gourds upon monuments of Egypt and Babylonia.

her, "Wait for me at the mouth of the Canal.[1]" Then we cast her in alongside the boat, after we had loosed the jar of sand from her legs[2] and done off her shackles, and returned. Now there remained one woman after her: so we took her and drowned her and the eunuchs went away, whilst we dropped down the river with the craft till we came to the mouth of Khalij, where I saw my mistress awaiting me. We haled her up into the canoe and returned to our pavilion on Al-Rauzah. Then I rewarded the sailor and he took his boat and went away; whereupon quoth she to me, "Thou art indeed the friend ever faithful found for the shifts of fortune.[3]" And I sojourned with her some days; but the shock wrought upon her so that she sickened and fell to wasting away, and redoubled in languor and weakness till she died. I mourned for her with exceeding mourning and buried her; after which I removed all that was in the pavilion to my own house and abandoned the building. Now she had brought to that pavilion a little coffer of copper, and laid it in a place whereof I knew not; so, when the Inspector of Inheritances[4] came, he rummaged the house and found the coffer with the key in the lock. Presently he opened it, and seeing it full of jewels and jacinths and ear-rings and seal-rings and precious stones (and 'twas a matter such as is not found save with kings and sultans), took it, and me with it, and he and his men ceased not to put me to the question with beating and torment till I confessed to them the whole affair, from beginning to end. Thereupon they carried me to the Caliph and I told him all that had passed between me and her; and he said to me, "O man, depart this city, for I release thee on account of thy courage and because of thy constancy in keeping thy secret and thy daring in exposing thyself to death." So I arose forthwith and fared from his city; and this is what befell me.

1 Arab "Al-Khalij," the name, still popular, of the Grand Canal of Cairo, whose banks, by-the-by, are quaint and picturesque as anything of the kind in Holland.

2 A few lines earlier it was "her neck"; but the jar may have slipped down.

3 We say more laconically "A friend in need."

4 Arab "Názir al-Mawáris," the employé charged with the disposal of legacies and seizing escheats to the Crown when Moslems die intestate. He is usually a prodigious rascal, as in the text. The office was long kept up in Southern Europe, and Camoens was sent to Macao as "Provedor dos defuntos e ausentes."

END OF VOL. II. OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS

END OF VOL. IX.